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**Joint Committee on the Third Special Session of 2020  
Testimony in Support of LC 18  
December 18, 2020**

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan social change organization with a nationwide membership of nearly 38 million and 510,000 in Oregon. We work to improve the quality of life for all as we age, strengthen our communities and fight for the issues that matter to Oregon families, including expanding housing options for affordable, safe and secure homes for all Oregonians.

**We urge the Joint Committee to move forward with the residential eviction moratorium and rental assistance proposal, LC 18. In addition, we urge consideration of our additional recommendations set forth below.**

The eviction moratorium and rental assistance currently in place have been critical for safety and security to Oregonians who have been impacted by the last nine months' economic crises. According to recent data from the National Council of State Housing Agencies, approximately 27,700 Oregon households face eviction risk if the moratorium isn't extended, with an estimated rent shortfall of between \$155 million to \$274 million.

Even before the pandemic, Oregon communities lacked affordable, accessible, and varied housing options. Sadly, the pandemic and the recent wildfires have exacerbated the situation. The housing crisis has disproportionately impacted older adults, people of color, and low-income individuals

Oregon cannot wait. LC 18, is a good start. The \$150 million landlord compensation fund and the \$50 million tenant assistance package will help ensure that families can stay safe and housed. It is time to take immediate, bold steps to protect our neighbors, prevent homelessness, and de-escalate the public health crisis.

**We believe the bill could be further strengthened by:**

- **Removing the declaration under threat of penalty of perjury requirement.**
- **Allowing more time to pay back rent** through a voluntary payment plan for balance of payment.



- **Requiring landlords to inform tenants when they seek and receive assistance**, and not just rely on the Housing and Community Services Department to send copies of the notice of disbursement.
- **Fixing Section 8.** Under Section 8 (3) (a), Notice of Eviction Protection, tenants can be evicted in the event of a demolition, conversion, and/or major repairs. We have two recommendations:
  - **Only repairs that are necessary for the quiet enjoyment and habitation and requested by tenant should be undertaken by the landlord until the emergency period ends.**
  - **The landlord should seek permission from the Housing and Community Services Department to demolish, convert, or make major repairs that will result in the eviction of the tenant.**
- **Clarify Section 9.** Amendment to Section 3 (3) states that a payment provided by the tenant should be applied in the following order: (a) current rental period; (b) utilities; **and (c) late fee.** However, this provision contradicts the declaration provided to the tenant that states: "**Your landlord cannot charge late fees for any portion of unpaid rent from April 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021.**" Therefore it is important that landlord is not allowed to charge any late fee from April 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021;

On behalf of over half million AARP Oregon members ages 50-plus statewide, we urge you to extend the residential eviction moratorium and rental assistance and move LC 18 and any additional amendments that address our stated concerns forward to the Third Special Session.