



*Housing Oregon
Board members:*

December 17, 2020

*Sheila Stiley,
Board chair – NW
Coastal Housing*

Senator Peter Courtney
Representative Tina Kotek
Co-Chairs, Joint Interim Committee on the 3rd Special Session 2020
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

*Diane Linn,
Vice-chair - Proud
Ground*

*Travis Phillips,
Secretary –
Catholic Charities
of Oregon*

Dear Co-chairs Courtney, Kotek, and members of the Joint Interim Committee on the 3rd Special Session:

*Trell Anderson,
Treasurer –NW
Housing
Alternatives*

Thank you for your leadership and work you are doing to help Oregonians make it through this pandemic by supporting the call for the special session this Monday in order to extend the rental eviction moratorium and create a landlord compensation fund.

*Rachael Duke -
Community
Partners for
Affordable Housing*

Housing Oregon's forty-five member organizations, affordable housing CDC's committed to serving and supporting low-income Oregonians, have been working hard to keep our residents housed through the pandemic and are grateful for the assistance they have received to date from the state.

*Ernesto Fonseca -
Hacienda CDC*

*Nkenge Harmon
Johnson – Urban
League of Portland*

The pandemic has especially had a disproportionate effect on communities of color, both in terms of devastating health impact as well as economic hardship. Both measures will allow low-income Oregonians to stay in their homes as the pandemic worsens and as the weather gets colder. Combined, they are a transitional strategy to help keep both resident and landlord economically whole through the worst of the crisis.

*Sean Hubert-
Central City
Concern*

*Richard Morrow –
Columbia Cascade
Housing Corp.*

The U.S. Census Bureau's most recent Household Pulse Survey, released December 16, identified one-fifth of renters in Oregon and nationwide reported being behind on rent payments in the U.S. The crisis is quickly growing as only 14% of Oregon renters reported being behind on payments mid-November. The survey also shows nearly 30% of Oregon renters reported having no confidence or slight confidence that they would be able to pay their rent next month.

*Arielle Reid –
NeighborWorks
Umpqua*

*Lisa Rogers –
CASA of Oregon*

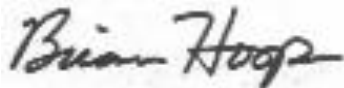
The National Council of State Housing Finance Agencies estimated in a September report that Oregon renters will have missed between \$249 million and \$378 million in rent payments by January. Between 100,000 and 150,000 Oregon households could be behind on rental payments by January according to the report.

Key to success is to keep the administrative structure simple, both for the tenants and landlords. While we understand the urge to incorporate accountability on the part of tenants by requiring the declaration, please recognize requiring additional documentation will be a barrier for some tenants. Such additional steps will disproportionately affect people of color and undocumented tenants who may be more hesitant to sign such documentation.

As mission driven organizations, it is critical to keep our eyes on the goal of ensuring long-term housing stability for low-income Oregonians. Bringing residents who are behind on rent payments back into stability is just a first step during this crisis. For the most vulnerable low-income Oregonians facing ongoing employment and health challenges as a result of the pandemic, we also need a go-forward assistance plan that will enable residents to see a light at the end of the tunnel. We look forward to the regular session in 2021 when investments in supportive services, employment assistance, and ongoing housing retention supports will be considered to ensure residents can avoid eviction and prolonged instability post pandemic.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions at 503-475-6056 or brian@housingoregon.org.

Sincerely,



Brian Hoop
Executive Director
Housing Oregon

cc:

House Republican Leader Christine Drazan
Senator Ginny Burdick
Senator James Manning Jr.
Senator Kim Thatcher
Representative Teresa Alonso Leon
Representative Julie Fahey
Representative Duane Stark