



A STRONG VOICE FOR OREGON'S WORKERS

TO: Co-Chairs Courtney and Kotek and Members of the Joint Interim Committee
on the Third 2020 Special Session

FR: Catie Theisen, Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: *Support of LC 18*

December 17, 2020

Co-Chairs Courtney and Kotek and members of the committee,

The Oregon AFL-CIO represents 300,000 workers across the state and is a voice for all workers in the legislative process. Thank you for the opportunity to provide public testimony on LC 18.

As worker advocates, we know that housing is a fundamental principle of survival and stable homes are essential for working families to have an opportunity to succeed, and during this pandemic, a critical part of their ability to stay safe and healthy. We applaud the legislature for bringing this important piece of a comprehensive worker protection package before the end of the year.

We know that while the majority of renters are keeping up with the rent, as the pandemic rages on it has become increasingly difficult, through no fault of their own. With unemployment at all-time highs, and increased layoffs, hour reductions and reduced economic activity this winter, we know that thousands of Oregonians have been displaced from their jobs and are struggling to make ends meet. And we know, that here again, Black and Latinx Oregonians are at the greatest risk of lifelong harm from the COVID evictions.

That's why we support extending the eviction moratorium and financial supports for residential housing and highroad commercial landlords. Because ultimately, making sure that Oregonians can stay in their homes during the winter surge of COVID-19 is a critical part of Oregonians staying home and staying safe, which in turn has a significant impact on our first responders, health care workers, and community advocates, and our economy as a whole.

We urge you to take action to meaningfully protect thousands of Oregonians from losing their homes and are looking forward to swift and decisive policy action on worker priorities and relief in the 2021 Oregon legislative session to make sure that Oregonians can continue to weather this pandemic and make safely reopening our economy a reality.