

**Joint Committee on the Third Special Session of 2020
Testimony in Opposition to LC18**

My name is Jeff Hill. I am a long-time resident of Bend, County of Deschutes, State of Oregon. LC18 is unjust, inequitable and poor public policy. I urge the state legislature to reject it.

1. Constitutional Issues. Our country was founded on the principles of respect for the ownership of private property and the freedom of contract. State government interference in the housing market by imposing a lengthy eviction moratorium is a violation of those foundational principles.
2. LC18 Unjustly Targets Landlords. The COVID pandemic has created many different kinds of hardships for all Oregon residents. Government interference with the legal process involving evictions unjustly and inequitably targets landlords. Grocery store owners have not been asked to provide free food to Oregon residents. Gas station owners have not been asked to provide free gas to motorists. Why target landlords with this legislation?
3. Socialization of Housing Costs. The portions of LC18 that propose state government funding of unpaid rent is an inequitable socialization of housing costs. All Oregon residents are dealing with financial issues of some kind relating to the COVID pandemic. It is a trying and difficult time for everyone. However, for the state to use taxpayer money to pay for individual Oregon residents' rental obligations is unjust and inequitable. The power to tax creates a responsibility on the part of the legislature to wisely spend state funds. Socializing the rental obligations of a few through the use of state taxpayer provided funds is unjust.
4. 20% Haircut is Unjust. LC18 proposes that the state compensate landlords at 80% of rent due, if landlords waive 20% of the rent due. What business can absorb that kind of reduction of gross margin? It is not sustainable. As so often happens, we have a situation of government intervention, then the offer of a governmental crutch, but with strings attached. This is a blatant shakedown of Oregon landlords.
5. LC18 is Counterproductive. The residential housing rental industry in the State of Oregon is in a period of transition. With the increased legislative intervention in the housing market of the last few years (relocation assistance, rent control), landlords are reassessing whether it makes sense to own residential rental property in Oregon. Some are concluding that it no longer makes economic sense to be a landlord. The eviction moratorium exacerbates that trend. However well meaning in the mind of some legislators, these actions attacking property owners reduces the available rental housing inventory. Less inventory means higher prices. Higher prices hurt, rather than help, renters.
6. Other Assistance Is Available. To be sure there are individual sympathetic situations involving renters and financial hardships. However, there are, and have been, and continue to be, other governmental assistance to provide a safety net. To impose a statewide moratorium on evictions is overbroad and

overreaching by the state. There are other, more limited and targeted, alternatives available.

7. 'Emergency' and 'Temporary' Relief Is Approaching a Year. The recent extension of the declaration of the state of emergency to March 2021 will mean that measures adopted as 'temporary' have been in place for a year. This is an irresponsible use of 'emergency' government interference with individual commerce. The eviction moratorium has been in place for far too long. Renters have had an adequate time evaluate their personal situations and make changes if required. Asking landlords to further subsidize tenants is unjust and inequitable.

LC18 is poor public policy. Please reject it.