

Co-Chairs President Courtney & Speaker Tina Kotek, Co-Vice Chairs Sen. Girod and Rep. Drazen, and members of the committee,

Re: Landlord support for LC 18, extending eviction moratorium and the rental assistance program.

For the record, my name is Jennifer Peskin and I am a landlord that provides housing for 1 household in Central Oregon and I am speaking in support of Legislative Concept 18.

As a landlord and housing provider, I appreciate the support that LC provides both landlords and tenants. As soon as it was obvious what was happening with our community shutting down in order to prevent the spread of COVID, I checked in with my tenants to make sure they were ok and asked if they needed any support regarding paying rent. It is very obvious to me that renters should not have to take the brunt of the burden during these difficult times.

We know that black and brown people are disproportionately affected by COVID and also are at the greatest risk of lifelong harm from the COVID evictions. Discriminatory housing policies have made homeownership difficult and inaccessible, leaving people of color at higher risk of rental evictions even as higher rates of COVID exposure are leaving people ill and economically stressed.

It is important at this time to provide support for families with children. COVID times are hard enough, families should not have to worry about losing their homes. Just last night I drove down a side street in Bend where used to be empty lots. Now that street is lined with cars and RV's and tents where people are now living. This change has occurred during the time of COVID. How many more people do we need to push out of their homes? It is not good for children, it is not good for families, it is not good for our community.

Under the current law, people could start losing their homes as soon as January 11th. I have seen the newsletters from organizations like Central Oregon Rental Owners' Association, who stated horrible things against renters and against Governor Brown during the pandemic. I stood up to them then and I stand up to them now. We are all in this together. Those of us who are rental owners have the privilege of owning a home and even if we don't receive the full amount of rent, we are still benefiting from the equity that we earn. Our renters only have their income, that is, if they are even still employed.

I also support the provision of LC 18 that requires tenants to give a one-time attestation of financial hardship. I think it is unnecessary for repeated attestations and worry they might be a reason harassed and intimidated if these protections are not put into place. People have enough on their plate without unneeded bureaucratic additional red tape.

I have watched the news and have seen in other countries how it was easier for people to stay home and stay safe because they were not burdened with unpaid bills. The government supported them to stay home and thereby helped mitigate the dangers of the pandemic. I am in full support of this being how we do it too.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Best,

Jennifer Peskin

Jenni Peskin She/Her

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"I sing like I feel"

Ella Fitzgerald