

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

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

For the record, my name is Karmen Chavez-Sam and I am here on behalf of APANO (Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon) and we serve Asians/Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the Portland Metro region and statewide. Thank you for taking up LC 18. We strongly support this bill is essential for the health and well being of the people we serve and for our community to avoid a wave of displacement and homelessness in our state that we have no ability to deal with and that would have a devastating impact on families and individuals.

- We strongly support the \$200 million package in this bill. There should be a landlord compensation fund that helps smaller landlords with back rent so they won't have to evict if they are financial straits, and also a rental assistance fund to help those tenants who will need assistance moving forward or whose landlords don't apply for the fund.
- Here is what's at stake. The [most recent data shows](#) that in Oregon between 27,700 households face risk of eviction if the moratorium isn't extended with an estimated rent shortfall of between \$155 to 274 million. The \$150 landlord compensation fund and the \$50 million tenant assistance package will go a long way to ensuring that families can stay safe in their home during the COVID pandemic until we have more vaccines for everyone.
- Our Black and Brown neighbors 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.
  - For example, according to the U.S. Census Pulse Survey, 30% of Black renters are at risk of eviction because of concerns they can't pay next month's rent.
  - Additionally, many of our low income AAPI renters were already cost-burdened before the pandemic (according to Coalition of Communities of Color's *Leading with Race*), and now face growing unpaid rent and potential eviction from their homes.
- Families with children are also at high risk. 22% say they may not be able to pay next month's rent. If they lose their homes through eviction, not only will they have a permanent record, but families who are hanging on by a thread through remote learning will have that thread cut.

Over the last several months, APANO has worked to support low-income AAPI renters, families, and small business owners in Washington and Multnomah Counties who have been hardest hit by the economic impacts of COVID. Many are experiencing constant stress over making rent and paying bills to keep their loved ones housed and fed. We need to extend tenant protections now so our communities can stay in their homes and focus on keeping their loved ones healthy and safe throughout the entirety of this pandemic.

The safest place for people to be in a pandemic is safe at home. Families and individuals will be at higher risk of COVID if they lose their homes and our communities will have increased spread of this terrible disease. Oregon's renting families have hung on this long. We cannot take away their lifeline now. We promised Oregon renters that they wouldn't lose their homes during the pandemic. We need to keep that promise.

Sincerely,  
Karmen Chavez-Sam  
[karmen@apano.org](mailto:karmen@apano.org)

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*Please visit our [APANO COVID-19 Resource Hub](#) for information and resources to help your family, community and business during this difficult time.*



**Karmen Chavez-Sam | Community Outreach Coordinator**

My Gender Pronouns Are: She, Her, Hers  
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