

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

I live in Clatsop County, where thousands of Oregonians who are renters have struggled financially during the COVID pandemic. Thank you for working to extend the eviction moratorium and provide funding for rent assistance so that hard working people working essential jobs, seniors and families with children do not pay the price of surviving this pandemic for the rest of their lives.

The remedies LC 18 includes are SO important right now because:

- COVID-19 isn't ending on December 31. Protections for our neighbors shouldn't either.
- The eviction moratorium should be extended through June of 2021 to help families get through the school year.
- We need a landlord compensation fund that helps smaller landlords with back rent to help stabilize the housing market, and a fund to help renters moving forward.
- The overwhelming number of renters are keeping up with their rent in Oregon despite the pandemic, job loss, and shut down communities. Assistance should be there for those who need the extra help.
- Until there are vaccines for everyone, 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.
- 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.
- Most pandemic impacted households have never been late with a rent payment in, but COVID has brought a new reality. With unemployment insurance ending and no federal assistance in sight, we need this bill to help keep us safe and in our homes during the pandemic and to also protect us from eviction and displacement.
- Clatsop county families, and those across the state have done all they can to pay the rent - using savings, making sacrifices, borrowing money. But people need help to get through this pandemic.
- The eviction moratorium has kept families stable. Schools have helped assure that they have computers and internet connection so children can do remote learning. Without the extension many would be thrown into uncertainty and the most difficult school year of our lifetimes would become even harder, disrupting children's education and affecting the rest of their academic career.
- Most Oregonians have done our part and played by the rules but with COVID, the rules have changed. If at risk households get an eviction on their record it will make it almost impossible to find a new home and hard working essential workers, seniors and families with children will suffer the effects of that for years to come. In a time like this when we are all facing an enemy larger than ourselves - this pandemic - we must come together and help each other through so that the impacts don't last a lifetime.
- Lifting eviction moratoriums increases COVID illness and death. The best prevention during the pandemic is a safe place to stay, which is why eviction moratoriums were put in place. Incidences of COVID-19 have risen in states that lifted moratoriums at 2.1 times the rate of states that maintained them. Deaths increased by 5.4 times.

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 and I urge you to pass LC 18.

Thank you, and please, stay safe and healthy as you work to make lives better for Oregonians in need.

Sincerely,

Kate

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