

Dear Legislators:

Please vote no on the rent assistance bill LC-18. Requiring landlords to accept 80% of what's due to us in return for government assistance is blackmail, pure and simple. It will incentivize our tenants to claim a need when the need is not real (and not even verified!). It encourages people who have not managed their money well to rely more and more on the government to bail them out. You should be encouraging your constituents to plan for emergencies (i.e. save up at least a year's worth of income to tide themselves over when times get rough, which they most certainly do) rather than just count that someone else (landlords and the government in this case) will take care of them.

My husband and I are in our mid- and late-60s and have worked extremely hard (day jobs) for 40 years to build our rental portfolio as a safeguard for us in retirement. We now have 12 rental units (single family homes and duplexes) and have just in the past couple of years BEGUN to see some net income from those properties. We still have mortgages and expenses related to maintenance and repairs. We manage our own rentals which is at least a half-time job for both of us.

Rental assistance programs interfere with supply and demand and cause landlords to become disenfranchised and less likely to work cooperatively with tenants. As a case in point...

We offered assistance to our renters when the pandemic began, BEFORE the relief programs started. Even though some of our tenants' jobs were affected by the pandemic, only one of them accepted our offer – the one to whom we had issued a legal eviction notice two weeks before the moratorium took effect. This tenant subsequently paid not a cent toward their rent for 8 months, even though she continued to have her acrylic nails done and he continued to go on Harley Davidson joy rides with his buddies. According to her, their stimulus checks were garnished for back taxes and overdue child support. After I provided them with the rent assistance link (they had no incentive to research this themselves because, after all, they were living in our rental unit for free), they submitted for rent assistance and we were relieved to receive their full rent for the unpaid 8 months. Then they gave us notice that they were moving back to California. It was painful to realize that we would have to return most of their security deposit when they left Oregon. We'd been used. Oregon was used. Your rental assistance program was used by these unscrupulous people. These are the kind of people rent assistance programs help, not the honest, responsible people who are trying to do the right thing, like all our other tenants.

Supply and demand (and generosity and cooperation) will work without interference from our legislature. In tough times, landlords and tenants will work together better without government interference. LC-18 pits landlords and tenants against one another. It helps the wrong people. And it drives our State and our nation into more reliance on government instead of responsibility for self. And that's a very bad idea.

Please vote no on the rent assistance bill LC-18.

*Sincerely,*

*Mark and Linda Sebring*