

To Our Elected Legislators,

My wife and I are residents of Bend Oregon, and we write to you as concerned Oregon residents to express our support in extending the moratorium on evictions in our state.

I am an attorney, and during my practice among other subjects, I handled landlord/tenant cases, often ones involving an eviction request. Almost without exception, those cases involved an alleged breach of the rental agreement or lease. And some of those cases had allegations that the tenant failed to pay rent. If that was true, then perhaps the eviction request was justified.

However, what exists today in Oregon, and elsewhere throughout the country, is totally different from the typical type of non-payment of rent eviction case mentioned above. We are all suffering in various ways from a crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic. The renter today who cannot pay his/her rent is not paying because of some dispute with the landlord or because of circumstances within his/her control. Those tenants have lost jobs and income solely due to the pandemic. Many of these people not only cannot pay rent, they cannot even buy food for themselves and their families.

While I feel for the landlords who are not collecting the income they normally would, it is absolutely essential that our state exhibit the needed compassion toward those who through no fault of their own cannot pay rent at this time. As a state and a community, we should be taking whatever steps we can to provide this assistance to tenants. This is an important thing to do now...we are not dealing with politics on this question...it is not an issue of Democrat v Republican or liberal v conservative. This is a matter of human compassion and necessity during an unprecedented time.

Thank you for your consideration of this.

Mark Patt and Michele Nichols