

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

I am NOT a renter -- in fact, I am a landlord. I live in the home my spouse owns, and rent out the house and apartment I bought before we met. I am one of the few landlords I know who works to keep rent low and stable. This property is not really an investment for me; I am merely renting it out to pay the mortgage/taxes and waiting to see if my family moves here and needs housing when they do.

I am writing in support of the hundreds of thousands of Oregonians who are renters and have struggled financially during the COVID pandemic. Thank you for working to extend the eviction moratorium and provide funding for rent assistance so that they do not pay the price of surviving this pandemic for the rest of their lives.

Our Black and Brown neighbors are at the greatest risk of lifelong harm from the COVID evictions. Discriminatory housing policies have 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.

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. COVID-19 isn't ending on December 31, and these back-up protections shouldn't either -- the eviction moratorium should be extended through June of 2021 to help families get through the school year, and help get us closer to a point where most people are vaccinated and can work freely.

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.

Please vote Yes on Legislative Concept 18 to extend the moratorium on evictions and provide assistance for tenants and landlords.

Thank you for your time,
Maro Sevastopoulos
Portland