

December 17, 2020

Subject: Yes on LC 18 to Help Oregon Families

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

My name is Melody and I am a 58 year old lifelong resident of Portland. I want to share my support for extending the eviction moratorium and creating a landlord compensation fund to help seniors like me stay in our homes.

After working hard for many years in housing renovation and landscaping, I had a serious injury that changed my life. I eventually had to apply for disability and I am now on a fixed income. I still work hard now to take care of myself and others, and as someone who survived extreme hardships and trauma, I've been able to overcome many obstacles. But COVID has disrupted my life in ways I couldn't imagine.

Before COVID, I was able to keep up with my rent through picking up child care jobs here and there. Things were tight but I was able to make it work. Now I am isolated at home and I only see my in-home caregiver. I am not able to earn any extra rent money. I have fallen behind on my rent and heating costs are piling up too. My landlord communicates well with me but I worry that if I get too far behind, he may have no choice to evict me for non-payment.

I am so grateful that you are holding this special session to protect renters like me from evictions and also create a landlord compensation fund so smaller landlords aren't forced into displacing people. I also appreciate all the help that community based agencies have provided to people like me who are in need. I know no one expected us to be in this position in December, but here we are. COVID isn't ending anytime soon. I hope my housing doesn't end either.

Sincerely,

Melody Ray
Northeast Portland, Oregon