

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

My name is Ryan Bowser. I live with my partner and child in Corvallis. If it wasn't for the eviction moratorium currently in place, I don't know what would have happened to me and my family. We have lost income because I have reduced hours to help our child with remote schooling. We lost income and our health insurance and my partner is pregnant. We have been doing everything we can to keep up, selling personal belongings, scrimping on food and other items. And one thing I know: while the eviction moratorium is ending on December 31, COVID surely isn't.

Families like ours are paying the price for this pandemic not just today but in the future. If we get an eviction on our record due to forces outside of our control, it will follow us for the rest of our lives. Finding a new rental or ever hoping to buy a home for our growing family - we are expecting a new baby next year - would be a pipe dream. The value of property continues to go up during this pandemic, so owners will get to the other side with even more equity and wealth. The stock market continues to skyrocket so investors will emerge with increased portfolios and wealth. But working people have seen only income losses - no gains and renters like me are only falling backwards with no way to get ahead.

I have never missed a rent payment in my life, but COVID has brought a new financial reality. If state lawmakers don't step up this week and declare that they will hold a special session to extend the moratorium and provide rent relief, come January 1, we will owe months of back rent that we cannot pay.

Time is running out. Evictions will start in just a few weeks if you don't take action to help families like ours.

Please pass LC 18 to help families like mine and all Oregonians who are suffering through this pandemic and doing the best they can to get through. We just need a little help to get us through until everyone in the state gets a vaccine and we can safely restart our economy.

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