



We build strength, stability, self-reliance and shelter.

Dec. 17, 2020

ATTN: Joint Interim Committee for Third Special Session of 2020

Re: Support LC 18 – Extend the eviction moratorium and provide rental resources to offset landlords' losses.

Dear Co-Chairs President Courtney & Speaker Kotek, Co-Vice Chairs Sen. Girod and Rep. Drazen, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Shannon Vilhauer, and I am the Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Oregon. Our network of 26 local Habitat for Humanity offices is working diligently to complete and sell 50 homes to first-time homebuyers by early 2021. Many of the families working towards their home purchases include front-line workers who fulfill essential duties in at-risk industries during the COVID-19 pandemic. These are the individuals bagging groceries, delivering packages, preparing food and working in hospitals.

On behalf of Habitat for Humanity of Oregon and the homebuyers we serve, I am writing to express our strong support for LC 18. As we continue to experience the COVID-19 pandemic, for all of us, home is our virtual classroom and office space. It's where we cook and eat all of our meals. It's our safe haven from the health crisis. Having a stable home has never been more critical.

Families need stability to ensure their children's education. More than one in five families who rent their homes and have school-aged children may not be able to pay next month's rent. Oregon already has one of the highest rates of student homelessness in the country. We stand to lose too much if children who have been learning remotely lose the ability to keep their education going in the pandemic.

Please extend the eviction moratorium through June of 2021 to help families get through the school year. Habitat for Humanity of Oregon supports the \$200 million package in this bill. We strongly endorse the landlord compensation fund to help smaller landlords recover back rent, to ensure their own financial solvency during these uncertain times. The rental assistance fund is another critical resource to help those tenants who will need assistance moving forward or with property owners who don't apply for the fund.

As recent data shows approximately 27,700 Oregon households face risk of eviction if the moratorium isn't extended, with an estimated rent shortfall of between \$155 to 274 million. The \$150 landlord compensation fund and the \$50 million tenant assistance package will go a long way to ensuring that families can stay safe in their home during the COVID pandemic until we have more vaccines

Thank you for your dedication, service and thoughtful consideration of LC 18.

With appreciations,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shannon M. Vilhauer".

Shannon M. Vilhauer, Executive Director