



December 16, 2020

RE: Support of Legislative Concept 18

Co-Chairs Kotek and Courtney, and members of the Committee,

The Welcome Home Coalition represents 65 organizations throughout the Portland metro region committed to finding new resources to end our region's housing crisis. To date, our members have helped secure nearly \$1 billion for new affordable housing construction and \$2.5 billion in homelessness services. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in tens of thousands of Oregonians across the state unable to afford the cost of housing. We urge your support of LC 18, which would extend the eviction moratorium through June 30, 2021 and provide \$200 million in much needed rent relief.

According to a recent National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) report, between 142,000 and 179,000 Oregonians are at risk of eviction because of the economic losses they have suffered from the COVID-19 pandemic.¹ Black and Latinx renters are disproportionately at risk of eviction, according to the study. These neighbors are at risk of being evicted and falling into homelessness through no fault of their own, unless Oregon lawmakers act to keep them housed.

Failing to extend the eviction moratorium and provide relief to renters would result in tens of thousands of Oregonians falling into homelessness. The trauma inflicted on those who find themselves in this situation is unthinkable, and avoiding that outcome is reason enough to support this legislative concept. But it is also critical to recognize the additional public costs if no action is taken. The NLIHC report estimates that COVID-19 eviction-related homelessness would cost Oregon taxpayers between \$1.3 and \$1.6 billion.² These estimates are conservative as they do not include, "the increased need for longer-term housing assistance, the cost of child welfare investigations that precede foster care, or the costs of arrests and courts that involve juvenile delinquency cases." Moreover, such a spike in homelessness would overwhelm an already inadequate social safety net.

To be clear, this is a starting point and more will need to be done in the upcoming legislative session to ensure Oregonians at risk of losing their homes through no fault of their own are able to stay housed. In the interim, we must provide Oregonians on the brink with much needed stability. We urge your support of this legislative concept.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tyler Mac Innis". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Tyler Mac Innis, Coalition Director

¹ National Low Income Housing Coalition. "[Costs of COVID-19 Evictions.](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/costs-of-covid19-evictions.pdf)" *nlihc.org*, 2020, <https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/costs-of-covid19-evictions.pdf>. Accessed 16 December 2020.

² *Ibid.*