



Housing Oregon  
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*Garrick Harmel –  
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*Kymerly Horner -  
Portland Community  
Reinvestment Inc.*

*Foster Martinez – St.  
Vincent de Paul Lane  
County*

*Richard Morrow –  
Columbia Cascade  
Housing Corp.*

*Kristy Rodriguez –  
Housing Authority of  
Malheur & Harney  
Counties*

December 10, 2021

To: Senator Lee Beyer, Co-Chair  
Representative Julie Fahey, Co-Chair  
Senator Tim Knopp, Co-Vice Chair  
Representative Kim Wallan, Co-Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee  
Joint Interim Committee on the Second Special Session of 2021  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Via email: [J2SS.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:J2SS.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov)

Dear Co-Chairs Beyer and Fahey, Co-Vice Chairs Knopp and Wallan, and the members of the committee:

I write to urge you to **pass the Emergency Rental Assistance Housing Safe Harbor Bill (LC 9)** which provides critical statutory changes to SB 278 to ensure thousands of households are not evicted while they wait for the state and federal rental assistance to get to the landlord. **No one should be evicted for nonpayment while their rent assistance application is being processed.**

As you recall, in the 2021 session, SB 278 passed with broad bipartisan support. However, the demand has been overwhelming during this prolonged and relentless COVID-19 pandemic health emergency threatening to thwart promises made. We need to ensure that we meet the pressing challenges during these uncertain times. We must act now to prevent the unnecessary and tragic generational harm that comes from eviction and displacement.

We urge passage of the following:

- Provide new funding for continuing access to rent assistance for tenants with low-income through the winter months until new federal resources are available, and for the landlord guarantee fund.

- Modify SB 278's safe harbor period to cover the entire application period, and extend the sunset on protections. Tenants who have applied for assistance should be protected until their application has been considered, and either granted or denied, no matter when they apply.
- Extend the sunset on the current 10-day (as opposed to 72 hour) notice period for nonpayment evictions, coupled with updated notice to tenants about eviction process and where to find rent assistance.
- This is a common-sense provision that works to facilitate access to available resources designed to prevent displacement.
- Expand and extend the current 60-day landlord guarantee fund to cover any period of time (not just 60 days) if a landlord delays eviction and a tenant is ultimately denied assistance or receives less than is owed when the case is closed. This removes risk for the landlord in ensuring tenant stability and access to assistance.

**Together, let's ensure that the promises made are promises kept.**

Sincerely,

Stacie W. Sanders  
Director, Policy and Advocacy  
Housing Oregon  
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*Housing Oregon is a membership-based statewide association of over 45-affordable housing Community Development Corporations (CDCs) committed to serving and supporting low-income Oregonians across the housing needs spectrum – from homeless to homeowner. We are working towards a day when every Oregonian has a safe and healthy place to call home.*