



ALEX CUYLER

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DATE: December 11, 2021
TO: Joint Interim Committee on the Second Special Session of 2021
FROM: Alex Cuyler, Lane County Intergovernmental Relations Manager
RE: Emergency Rental Assistance-LC 9

Dear Co-Chair Beyer, Co-Chair Fahey, and Members of the Committee:

Lane County has been a front line provider of COVID related safety net services since early March, 2020. In addition to ensuring access to COVID testing and vaccinations, we have provided a myriad of business and community assistance in an effort to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic.

We were an early provider of rental assistance, knowing that the risk of homelessness expanded exponentially for residents with extremely low incomes.

We advocated for the passage of SB 278 during the 2021 Legislative Assembly, in particular the eviction moratorium for those in the queue for rental assistance.

We believed the 60 day extension of the moratorium would be sufficient to ensure processing of applications. That assumption turned out to be wrong.

In November of 2021 we undertook the development of an emergency county-wide Ordinance to extend the SB 278 eviction moratorium by 30 additional days, even understanding that Ordinance would expose Lane County to some additional risk.

LC 9 provides better language than SB 278 in terms of protections for those in the queue for rental assistance, and take affect statewide. It represents a better solution for landlords and tenants alike than the patchwork of local Ordinances that exist now.

It is our understanding the Legislature will additionally consider a budget bill to make further investments in the rental assistance system. We support investments that bolster the Oregon Emergency Rental Assistance Program as well as refill the Landlord Guarantee Fund.

The pandemic is not yet over in Oregon. We appreciate that the Legislature is willing to consider what we believe to be strategic and important policies and fiscal decisions to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic for extremely low income Oregonians.

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