

December 10, 2021

Re: Support for rental assistance policy in LC 9

Dear Co-Chairs Beyer and Fahey, Co-Vice Chairs Knopp and Wallan, and other distinguished Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Jackie Leung, and I am writing in support of the rental assistance policy in the Housing Safe Harbor Bill (LC 9), in my capacity as a Commissioner of the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OCAPIA),.

OCAPIA's mission is to work for the implementation and establishment of economic, social, legal, and political equality for Asian and Pacific Islanders (API) in Oregon and to maintain a continuing assessment of the issues and needs confronting API communities.

During the 2021 legislative session, OCAPIA supported SB 278, which was to ensure that Oregonians remained housed and protected from eviction while awaiting federal and state rental assistance. Housing for all remains a priority considering that one of the devastating impacts of COVID-19 is the harm that occurred with Black, Indigenous, and Communities of Color (BIPOC). We continue to see significant and harmful barriers impacting community members who are not able to navigate the complexities of the rental assistance process and tight deadlines. The application was not created with health equity needs in mind, requiring community-based organizations and others to fill the gap to provide support for housing

**Oregon Commission on
Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs**

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Vice-Chair:

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needs. However, the end result is the same – increased housing instability as a large number of BIPOC communities faced obstacles to the application and process due to language barriers, access and availability to the online platform, and other factors that make it difficult to reach the rental assistance programs.

Like our community partners such as the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) and the Micronesian Islander Community (MIC), I, along with members of OCAPIA, urge you to keep the promise of eviction protection by passing the following:

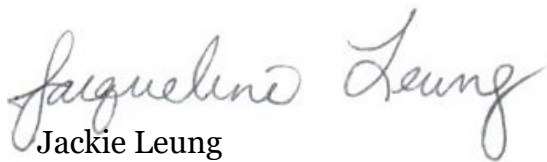
- Provide new funding for continuing access to rent assistance for tenants with low-income through the winter months until new federal resources are available, and for the landlord guarantee fund.
- Modify SB 278’s safe harbor period to cover the entire application period, and extend the sunset on protections. 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.



With the cold temperatures descending upon Oregon, Oregonians need more rental protections than ever before. At the same time, local landlords and owners also need their financial needs met, as their costs continue to increase without payment. We must invest in programs that are equitable and provide all Oregonians with the opportunity to pay their rent and to thrive.

We urge you to support the rental assistance policy in the Housing Safe Harbor Bill (LC 9).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jacqueline Leung". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Jackie Leung

OCAPIA Commissioner

