

Chair Fahey, Chair Jama, and members of the committee,

My name is Al Doggett, I live in Multnomah County in SE Portland.

I am here to discuss the legislative concept 9, Oregon Emergency Rental Assistance Program

I am a disabled person in a house with my other disabled family, whom all have chronic illnesses and various ailments that us being homeless would be a death sentence for us all. We also have pets that are our children and it is not fair to them or us to lose our home that we worked so hard to even have. I have been struggling with OERAP since June. We now have received a 10 day notice of eviction from our landlord, although she is being incredibly understanding and not taking action on it until January to allow OERAP to send the money promised months ago. We are still at high risk of facing eviction as we do not have the thousands of dollars that is needed to prevent the eviction unless OERAP does what they say they will do.

We are well past our 60 day protection as we applied in June and it is still dragging on. Anytime we call to get information we get a run around and have not even been able to speak to any higher ups and when we ask for one, the agents that we speak to say what we realize is a script where they say that the supervisors are always in meetings or trainings for 45 minutes. OERAP has stopped returning our messages and calls. We call every day and have been for 2 weeks now and our status keeps changing. Our utilities are being cut off at the end of the month unless we find several hundreds/thousands of dollars for those bills as well. OERAP stated that we were approved for funding for the utilities months ago and now they are stating that that is no longer the case as they ran out of money.

We need help and we need our legislature to step in and hear our cries for help. The pandemic has already caused enough suffering to people like us, and now we are going into an incredibly cold winter and if we become homeless it is a death sentence. We need security and promises to be kept that have been made and then some. The bare minimum just is not cutting it. Please hear us and help those of us in the community that are truly struggling.

Thank you for allowing me the chance to testify, Chair Fahey and Chair Jama, and members of the committee.