

Co-Chair Beyer, Co-Chair Fahey, Co-Vice Chair Knopp, Co-Vice Chair Wallan, Members of the Committee,

From the beginning of this crisis, Multnomah County's highest priority has been to slow the spread of COVID-19 and keep people safe. We've known for years about the inseparable connection between housing and health.

As we began to understand the monumental challenges that the pandemic would pose for our community, we recognized that helping people stay in their homes would be both a public health imperative, and simply the right thing to do.

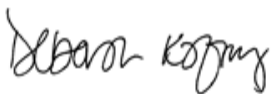
While the ongoing vaccination efforts represent a very real sense of hope and optimism on the near horizon, it doesn't mean that our community's recovery from the pandemic will be equally felt among all Oregonians, especially communities that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, Black, Indigenous and Communities of Color.

Considering the scale of resources required to help people meet their rent obligations, the Legislature needs to make sure there is additional time to distribute funding through a system that was never designed to help so many people in this short of time. There also needs to be additional funding to reach all landlords and tenants who have applied for assistance.

First, expand and extend the current 60-day landlord guarantee fund to cover any period of time if a landlord delays eviction and a tenant is ultimately denied assistance or receives less than is owed when the case is closed. This protects both tenants and landlords.

Second, additional funds for rent assistance are critical. Multnomah County, in partnership with the City of Portland, has delivered over \$70 Million in rent assistance outside of the State's program and we estimate that there is an additional \$50 Million in rent assistance needed to protect landlords and tenants.

We appreciate your consideration and support.



Deborah Kafoury
Multnomah County Chair



Sharon Meieran
District 1 Commissioner



Susheela Jayapal
District 2 Commissioner



Jessica Vega Pederson
District 3 Commissioner



Lori Stegmann
District 4 Commissioner