

Testimony Regarding LC 9

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**SEIU Supports the 2021 Special Session LC 9 Tenant Protections, however we are disappointed about the arbitrary timelines that keep getting placed on tenants.**

The COVID 19 pandemic has exacerbated the housing crisis for many low income Oregonians including many of our members. The increased numbers of people seeking emergency assistance, accompanied with the increase in long needed investments have put an immense amount of strain on the current system and created a backlog of applications for Oregonians needing rental assistance. However, Oregonians have needed emergency rental assistance long before COVID and that will continue unless we have systemic change in housing and the economic stability of low income families.

This legislation deals with an immediate short-term need by providing new and continuing access to rent assistance, modifying the safe harbor period to protect tenants from evictions, and extends the sunset that allows tenants ten days notice for evictions instead of 72 hours. And the legislation continues to guarantee landlords their rent.

However, SEIU strongly believes that housing should be treated like many other government programs that if somebody has applied and there is a reasonable belief that they qualify and will receive the benefit they shouldn't face negative consequences including the risk of eviction. By placing another short term sunset and timeline on the bill we are in danger of again running the clock out on tenants.

SEIU would urge the legislator to convene and address the long term and systemic issue that tenants should not be displaced because of a backlog created by decades of disinvestment and underfunding of core government functions. Oregonians deserve the time and protections to keep their homes.



SEIU Local 49 & SEIU Local 503

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