

Co-Chair's Beyer, Fahey, Vice-Chairs Knopp, Wallan and Members of the Committee thank you for this opportunity to share some of my experience as both a community manager with MG Properties overseeing 565 units, and board president of Multifamily NW, the largest housing association in Oregon.

For 21 months, I have advocated for emergency rental assistance, in both op-eds (<https://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/2020/03/opinion-rental-assistance-must-be-a-top-priority-for-the-state.html>), and to elected officials. Early on, the requests were ignored by those in office who could make an impact, though the coming storm was ahead. I have also pointed out you do need to have the courts open to flush out the fraud that could take place and hurt others in need from getting that assistance. Time and again, the State of Oregon has chosen the wrong path, at the direction of elected leaders with a different agenda.

Part of the problem began with a complicated process of getting rental assistance to people in need. From a lengthy application process, technology glitches, and delays on getting the money out the door, this was not conducted in a way an "emergency" should have been addressed. Oregon Housing and Community Services got this wrong from day one and has avoided accountability. Hopefully that ends soon.

The answer is not another special session of the Oregon Legislature. The group that has continuously got the solution to the problem wrong will not miraculously stumble upon an answer in December. The legal process needs to be opened, people facing eviction for non-payment of rent need to have their day in court and rental assistance paid in those cases, and bad actors held accountable to the legal agreements they entered into with housing providers. If you don't do this, property rights are eroded, and the cost of rental housing will go through the roof in Oregon because it's too dangerous to rent out property here. If that happens, Oregon has a bigger housing affordability issue and the homeless problem grows exponentially.

This is an agency issue, not a policy issue. And if it is not a policy issue, the legislature should not be intervening. The E-Board can move the appropriate amount of money for rental assistance and those who have applied can be made whole. Please don't complicate the solution at this time. Thank you.

Dan Mason

MG Properties

Board President for Multifamily NW

