



March 3, 2021

To: Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Linthicum and members of the committee

From: Katie Rose, Chair, Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition

RE: Support for SB 282-1: Tenant COVID Protections

---

The Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition (DD Coalition) is a group of approximately 38 organizations and individuals across Oregon that advocate for and promote quality services, equity, and community integration for Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families. Our members represent advocacy groups (including self-advocacy organizations), family peer supports, DD residential providers, DD supported employment providers, and Support Services Brokerages.

We believe that everyone deserves a safe, accessible, affordable place to call home. However, COVID has put many people and families at risk of losing their housing. The pandemic has been particularly difficult for people with IDD because they are at increased risk of serious COVID illness and at increased risk of contracting COVID because they rely on many people for support in their daily life. Many people with IDD and their family members have had to give up their jobs to avoid contracting COVID. Without income, a family's housing is threatened.

We support SB 282-1 because it extends the grace period to pay back rent to February 2022 which will allow tenants time to pay back their debt that accumulated during the pandemic.

Renters need more time to pay back rent. According to the State Office of Economic Analysis, job prospects for low-income Oregonians "remain dim" during the recovery and we will not be back to full employment until 2023. Many people with IDD fall in the category of "low-income" and depend on jobs that may take time to recover from this pandemic. We need to make sure that Oregon's COVID recovery doesn't leave anyone out, including people with disabilities.

The eviction moratorium was essential to helping renters stay safe and stable in their homes, but they need more time to pay thousands of dollars in back rent or to apply for rental assistance. As nearly a half a billion dollars of state and federal tenant and landlord assistance are being distributed, we must ensure that people have time to access assistance, they aren't unfairly evicted after the moratorium ends, and that a temporary setback during COVID doesn't make it impossible for them to rent in the future.

We urge you to pass SB 282-1.