



City of Portland

March 4, 2021

Senator Jama, Chair
Senate Committee on Housing and Development
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE, Salem OR 97301

RE: SB 282 -1 COVID Recovery

Dear Chair Jama and Members of the Committee:

With 1 in 5 Oregon renters residing in Portland and 1 in 4 Oregon renters living in Multnomah County, the City in partnership with the County will need as much time as possible to allocate all available emergency rent assistance. The City of Portland supports SB 282 and the -1 amendment to ensure that landlords and tenants can access existing and anticipated Federal rent assistance funds.

The amendments to SB 282-1 will allow the State sufficient time to distribute critical Federal rent assistance, which will support vulnerable households and the long-term economic recovery needed from the pandemic. SB 282-1 will also provide adequate time for local jurisdictions and community partners to get these critical resources in to the hands of community members in need.

The Landlord Compensation Fund is in its initial stage of accepting applications. The State and entitlement jurisdictions are currently establishing new emergency rent assistance programs with the Federal funding allocation passed by Congress in December 2020. State and local jurisdictions will need time to allocate anticipated funding from the Biden Administration's American Recovery Act currently in discussion in Congress with the possibility of a vote in the Senate as early as March 4, 2021.

Time is needed to create programs and distribute funds which is why the rent arrearage grace period should be extended to February 22, 2022. We must continue to ensure that Oregonians are stably housed throughout the pandemic and we should not allow evictions for non-payment of rent so long as there are Federal emergency rent assistance funds available.

Additionally, we must ensure that tenants are not punished for the economic fallout of a global pandemic by inhibiting their ability to rent in the future. Landlords should be prohibited from considering evictions for non-payment of rent during the COVID-19 pandemic when screening applicants, credit reports should not include evictions for non-payment of rent or rent debt

incurred during the COVID-19 declared state of emergency, and the current FED expungement process should be expanded to include FEDs during the COVID-19 period.

Thank you for your consideration. I urge your support for SB 282-1.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Ryan", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dan Ryan
Commissioner