



March 15, 2021

## **Support Commercial Tenants: Pass HB 2966, -1 and Extend the Repayment Period**

Bricks Need Mortar provides support, visibility and strategic planning for over 800 small businesses. We survey our members regularly and our latest survey shows that 47% of our small businesses' sales are down 25% or more.

94% of our reporting small businesses are women owned

14% are BIPOC owned

6% are LGBTQ+ owned

Our small businesses need more time for federal and state relief to reach them. We urge you to support commercial tenants, our job creators. Pass HB 2966, -1 and extend the repayment period.

As a part of the commercial eviction moratorium passed by HB 4213A in the first special session of 2020, back rent accrued during the moratorium (between April 1-September 30, 2020) is currently due March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. While \$100M was allocated by the E-Board in January 2021 for commercial rent assistance, current estimates don't put the first round of relief out the door until mid-April and the second round in May.

**Small businesses need more time.** Extending the protected repayment period for another six months will provide time for state funds to be allocated through the commercial rent relief program, additional federal dollars to come to small businesses through the American Rescue Plan, and for Oregon to more fully re-open as we make progress against COVID-19.

HB 2966 with the -1 Amendment will extend the repayment period until September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021, protecting commercial tenants from eviction due to back-rent accrued during the moratorium.

Evicting commercial tenants who need more time to address the great burden of rents accrued when they were unable to conduct business will only delay and prolong our recovery.

Our recovery will be stronger and swifter when we help our small businesses to stay in place, revive and rehire.

Be well and be together!

Sarah

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