



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

Re: Support for SB 282-3, Tenant COVID Protections

For the record, my name is Kim McCarty and I am the Executive Director of the Community Alliance of Tenants. (CAT). CAT is Oregon's only statewide, grassroots, tenant-controlled, tenant-rights organization. I am here to testify in support of SB 282-3 because this bill supports our conviction that no Oregon renter, regardless of immigration status, should be evicted or burdened with years of debt for rent that they were unable to pay during the pandemic, through no fault of their own.

CAT appreciates the leadership of this committee to retain the most critical tenant protections, including a grace period to pay back rent.

SB 282-3 addresses the problem of finding the time to get access to resources to pay months of unpaid rent due job loss and other COVID -19 related causes. Importantly the amendment retains the "doubling-up" protections because in these times many families find it necessary to double-up and they should not be penalized for this common response of caring for others.

In a recent CAT survey, a significant number of tenants reported harassment by landlords. For this reason, it is also important that the increased damages for retaliation violations stay in the bill. While CAT strongly supports SB282-3 it does not address does not address the problem of low-income renters not having the resources to pay future rent. Therefore, we cannot overlook the opportunity to say that until there is plan to help households during the recovery period, the eviction moratorium should be extended. This will give tenants and landlords time to access the rent relief that can be spent as late as September 2022.

For our most vulnerable communities we must explore every tool available to us to protect and stabilize communities. Because we can foresee the negative outcomes of this crisis, we can also act to prevent it.

Sincerely,

Kim McCarty  
Executive Director  
Community Alliance of Tenants