

Chair Fahey, Vice-Chair Wlinsvey Campos, Vice-Chair Morgan, Members of the Committee,

Re: Support for SB 282A, Tenant COVID Protections

My name is Kristen Dewey and I represent the Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence in Linn and Benton Counties. Thank you for taking up SB 282A. I strongly support this bill, which provides essential protections to tenants after the eviction moratorium expires on June 30, 2021.

I support SB 282A because it will stabilize renter households, and ensure that there is time for state and federal rent assistance to reach landlords and resolve back rent debt. This bill comes to your committee with strong bipartisan support in the Senate, after significant work on amendments that resulted in no opposition to the bill.

Prompt passage of the bill is essential to ensure that tenants and landlords can benefit from the more than \$500 million in federal rental assistance that will be distributed in the coming months. These payments are made directly to landlords and can pay back-due, current, or future rent. Tenants and landlords need time to allow for distribution of these funds.

SB282 will help survivors of sexual and domestic violence maintain their housing stability and allow them time to plan for future stability in this very uncertain time. The most vulnerable to violence and homelessness in our communities need this protection.

As an advocate who helps survivors find and secure housing on a daily basis I routinely witness the struggle of choosing between back rent, future rent, and daily necessities. Renters need more time to pay back rent. It's impossible to get fully caught up by July. Renters need protection from COVID-era black marks on credit and rental history, and protection from landlord retaliation. And during this ongoing emergency, renters need the ability to share housing when it's necessary, without risking eviction.

As we move into the next stage of the COVID pandemic, we must acknowledge the ongoing difficulty that continues to face our most vulnerable communities. Oregon renters who have faced COVID-era financial setbacks have shown resilience through one of the most difficult times our state has ever faced. Lawmakers have come together time and time again during the pandemic to keep people safe and in their homes. SB 282A will continue that work and we urge its swift passage.

Thank you.
Kristen Dewey
Sexual Assault Response Advocate
Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence