

Dear Chair Smith Warner and members of the House Rules Committee,

Please vote NO on the Dash-2 gut and stuff amendment for SB 278 that would essentially extend the nonpayment of rent eviction moratorium. Passage of Dash-2 would unfairly extend our existing 15-month eviction moratorium for a third time, further damaging Oregon's rental housing industry unnecessarily.

Please consider the following points:

- SB 282, which was signed into law on May 19, already provides tenants with an array of rental-related protections, including an extended grace period for repayment of balances until February 28, 2022; among all 50 states, Oregon already provides one of the most protective grace period repayment options for Oregonians.

- Since early April 2021, hundreds of millions of dollars in state-based rental resources have been awarded and are available for Oregon residents who qualify and voluntarily choose to participate; the vast majority of housing providers have worked tirelessly to help support tenant participation in these programs and many providers have already suffered significant losses with programs such as LCF's 20% rental forgiveness requirement in an effort to help their tenants in need.

- According to OHA, as of June 11th, 67% of Oregonians (age 18 and older) have already been vaccinated. Since individual county requirements to qualify for low-risk restrictions have a threshold below 67% (set at 65%), we anticipate employment within most industries to further strengthen as the pandemic continues to abate; therefore, with a burgeoning job market, enhanced unemployment insurance, and plethora of remaining state and county rental assistance funds, Oregon renters have multiple resources to assist with future housing rental commitments should they still be needed.

We encourage you to vote against extending our existing 15-month eviction moratorium a third time to prevent further damage to our Oregon housing industry, local economies, and the state's ability for a successful post-covid rebound.

On a more personal note, I can't not even begin to express how unbearably difficult the last 14 months have been for small landlords. I am not referring to large corporations which own thousands of rental units. I can't speak to that because I don't know anyone in that category. I am referring to private citizens who own one or two rental properties and who rely on the rental income from their properties for their monthly income, to support a relative, or to cover college tuition for child. Some of my clients have not received rent in for over a year but have still had to pay for property taxes, property insurance, maintenance, and utilities. Some of my clients suffered significant damage from the snowstorm in January and had to cover the cost of repairs with no rent coming in. I have retired clients who depend on rent for their monthly income. I have clients with special needs children who depend on rent to provide services for their family. How much longer can these people be expected subsidize their tenants after over a year of providing housing and services for free?

The state is re-opening. Restaurants are opening. Offices are opening. Colleges are opening. It is absolutely unconscionable to force property owners to continue to defer rent. Tenants who have deferred rent during the current eviction moratorium have until February 2022 to repay the balance. Perhaps some tenants will repay what they owe, but many will not and will just vacate the property before the end of the repayment period leaving the property owners substantial losses. People who provide rental property in the State of Oregon are just like every other business person in Oregon. They cannot provide their product which is safe and comfortable housing for free. Yet they have been doing just that for over a year. Oregon property owners must have the opportunity to conduct business again just like the restaurants that are re-opening.

Lisa Long