



Service Employees International Union – Oregon State Council

January 29, 2023

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, Members of the Senate Housing Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of Senate Bill 799 to stop rapid non-payment evictions and provide a short safe harbor period.**

My name is Felisa Hagins and I am testifying on behalf of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Oregon. SEIU Oregon is composed of SEIU Local 503 and SEIU Local 49, which together represent over 87,000 people. Local 49 represents private sector janitors, property service workers, light manufacturing, and healthcare workers; while Local 503 represents homecare workers, private nonprofit workers, in-home childcare providers, nursing home workers, and state and local government employees.

We believe that every Oregonian should be able to afford rent and have access to a place they call home without having to put in jeopardy their ability to pay for food, child care, transportation, health care, taxes, and other necessities. Unfortunately, Oregon has seen a 14.6% rent increase and there have been more than 2,000 eviction filings every month since the expiration of protections, which is a 43% increase over pre-pandemic levels. These rent increases have negatively impacted the homes and lives of our members; many of whom are low-income frontline workers.

Currently, people only have 72 hours to apply for rent assistance and pay their landlord. It is unjust and unfair to expect Oregonians like our members to search for, find, apply, receive rent assistance and give that payment over to their landlords on top of taking care of their families, going to work, and any other commitments they may have.

SB 799 would create a more reasonable eviction timeline by increasing the time that people have to search for and receive rent assistance from 72 hours to 10 days. It would also provide a 60-day safe harbor period in case there are any delays in local rent assistance agencies. No one should lose their home when there is rent assistance available and on the way.

SEIU Oregon strongly urges the Committee to stand in unity with our members and support SB 799.

Thank you,

Felisa Hagins
Political Director
SEIU Local 49