



January 30, 2023

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Community Action Partnership of Oregon (CAPO), I would like to express our support for Senate Bill 799, designed to provide critical protections for Oregonians at risk of eviction. Our statewide network of community action agencies is working with local partners to prevent vulnerable individuals from being displaced and at risk of homelessness. What we have learned throughout this pandemic is that there isn't a simple solution to this challenge, and it will require a package of efforts that are complementary, such as increasing rent assistance, limiting rate increases, and enhancing the data available about Oregon's rental market.

Our network has been working with community partners to provide financial assistance through eviction prevention funding allocated under the leadership of Oregon's Legislature, with rent arrears, security deposits, and utility arrears, as well as providing 90 to 180 days in on-going rental assistance, integrating to the extent possible assistance with case management services. Due to the high demand for assistance and limited resources available, many communities are prioritizing assistance to tenants from the FED system, where staff intercede in court evictions on-site, or via direct referrals from established partnerships with culturally specific organizations. In many communities, the unfortunate reality is that we have expended all of the eviction prevention assistance funding available.

This bill provides several significant eviction process interventions to help facilitate fairness and access to services, with the goal of preventing displacement and eviction that we would like to highlight:

- Reinstates a safe harbor period of up to 60 days for people who have notified the landlord they have applied for rent assistance, ensuring that no one is evicted when help is on the way;
- Reinstates the "pay to stay," so that landlords are unable to refuse payment at any point before a final court judgement;
- Reinstates the requirement to provide access to eviction information in the six most common languages spoken in Oregon; and
- Streamlines the eviction sealing process for those who currently qualify, so that eligible tenants can more easily remove barriers to future housing.



In closing, I would strongly urge you to support Senate Bill 799 and pass it out of committee as quickly as possible as part of an essential package that includes \$100 million in new rent assistance, to help prevent homelessness as individuals recover from the pandemic. As a network, we are committed to continuing to work closely with partners in communities throughout the state to prevent individuals from losing their housing in today's challenging environment.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janet Allanach".

Janet Allanach  
Executive Director