

Submitter: Faye Wing

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB2001

Chair Dexter, Vice-Chairs Gamba and Helfrich, and Members of the Committee, On behalf of myself, my loved ones, my friends, and my community, please accept this testimony in strong support of HB 2001, which is an important element of the emergency response to our current housing crisis. I am particularly writing to urge support of Sections 14-26 of HB 2001, which contain essential and reasonable improvements to the language used in Oregon's eviction statutes to promote stability and payment rather than displacement and eviction.

These sections are of particular urgency because as it stands, the laws that are in place make it easy for landlords to evict tenants swiftly and with little to no recourse. This could very easily affect myself and those I write on behalf of. In spite of the "no one wants to work" rhetoric being pushed these days, the fact is, very few businesses are hiring applicants. I myself have spent countless hours applying to dozens and dozens of jobs at a time, only to hear back "We found someone else" if I hear back at all. Everyone I know has a similar story.

Not only that, the margin for unpaid rent is so thin these days that one withheld check or one check that comes late could, under current law, leave myself or my loved ones unhoused—and unsheltered due to heavily impacted shelters and little to no funding. 72 hours is not long enough to give to someone—for instance—whose boss consistently pays late, especially when a person can't just go out and get a "better" job, or to someone who—for instance—is on Federal Disability and has no control over when their check is issued, or someone—for instance—who works on commission and just needs a few more days to make up what they're short for rent that month. These are just some examples of why a person would need more than 72 hours to come up with enough money to have their case dismissed (as proposed in lines 18-20).

Listen, nobody here likes seeing people unhoused and living in tents—some of us for more selfish reasons and some because of human empathy, but that doesn't change the facts—and right now, the law grants landlords unreasonable amounts of power to create homelessness swiftly and easily. I urge you to think of how much brighter the future of Oregon would look if evictions were far less common, causing far fewer people to become unhoused and unsheltered.