

March 4, 2021

Subject: Yes on SB 282-1

Chair Jama, Co-Chair Linthicum, members of the Committee,

I am one of tens of thousands of Oregon renters whose lives have been dramatically altered because of COVID-19.

Everything was going great for me until COVID happened and both my partner and I lost our jobs in food and beverage. We haven't been able to pay rent since August, and that's not for lack of trying. We've done our very best. falling behind on credit card payments, on everything, you name it. There were months we had to cut back on groceries in order to try and pay some of our rent.

My partner and I both have health conditions that have been exacerbated in the pandemic. My work has been shut down for much of the pandemic. At current rates, the state won't be fully vaccinated by June - not even close. With the economy being partially shut down and not being able to work, there's no way I'll be able to pay my back rent. I know there's been federal rent assistance but renters need some time to be able to access it. If we are evicted, we'd be forced to leave Oregon. This is my home, my community. I love it here. Renters like me need more time to get caught up on rent. We need help to get through the pandemic and get back on our feet.

It's unconscionable that our credit and rental history could be destroyed because of a pandemic. I'm young and it would be devastating to be blocked out of housing for decades to come. We need protections from landlord retaliation and we need to be able to help each other out and share housing when it's necessary without risking eviction.

I urge you to pass SB 282-1. Oregon's renters have been struggling to stay afloat. The legislature's actions so far have helped and you have promised Oregon renters that they wouldn't lose their homes during the pandemic. I hope you will keep that promise. Thank you.

Williams Grimoldi
Portland, Oregon