

March 4, 2021

Subject: Yes on SB 282-1

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

I'm an in-home caretaker in North Bend and I make \$15.77/hour. I have diabetes that makes me highly vulnerable to COVID, so my work options have been limited and I've only found work for two days a week. When COVID first hit, I started paying my rent months in advance in case I lost my job. Even so, I'm not making enough to live. I've been late on many of my bills, accumulating late charges. It all adds up and I'm worried about how I'll keep my lights and my internet on. I've been homeless before, and I'm especially scared that my son is at risk of losing his home.

My son is a single dad with a one-year-old baby. He has mental health conditions and the pandemic has been really hard for him. He's behind on his rent and the landlord has been coming over to his house and harassing him, yelling at him, even slamming the door on him. My son is so worried about being on the streets with his baby. If he is to be evicted, he has nowhere to go. I'm scared that he won't even be able to stay with me, or I'll get thrown out too because of occupancy limits on my lease. On the streets, my son won't be able to access the mental health support he needs and his conditions would only get worse.

SB 282-1's extension of the grace period would mean the world to us and allow him time to access assistance and start to pay back rent. It would protect my son from even more landlord retaliation. It would stop us from being barred from future housing because of marks on our credit and rental histories. It would keep us off the streets.

If you have one eviction, even if it's not your fault, no one will rent to you. Plus, once you've been homeless that stigma stays with you and it gets even harder to find housing. Me and my elderly mom, we were looking for 2.5 years before we got this place. These impacts can last a lifetime. If we're able to stay in our current housing, we'll be able to overcome the impacts of COVID-19 and keep plowing forward to pay things back. Lawmakers have the power to pass SB 282-1 and keep low-income and vulnerable tenants like me and my son safe, with a roof over our heads.

We have the responsibility to ensure that Oregon's recovery doesn't leave anyone out like single parents, low-income workers, and BIPOC Oregonians. Those of us who have borne the economic brunt of the pandemic and are more likely to have lost income, to rent our homes, and to have contracted COVID. The protections that SB 282-1 offers can stop the impacts of COVID-19 from lasting a lifetime for vulnerable tenants like us.

Maryanne Kelley
North Bend, Oregon