

I am the sole owner of a duplex in SE Portland that I manage myself. I have owned this property for nine years. I am retired and live off of my savings, plus a very small return from my rental property. I view my tenants as my customers and always strive to provide them a safe, comfortable, and pleasant place to live.

Over the last three years, I have become increasingly alarmed at the burdensome, complicated, and often contradictory regulations imposed upon rental housing providers by the state of Oregon and city of Portland. While I understand the market forces that have brought these changes, cumulatively they are punitive to landlords who strive to follow the rules but may make an honest mistake, while exempting tenants who exhibit deliberate bad behavior or act in bad faith.

That is especially the case in the proposed changes in SB282-1. Covid has made life hard for everyone, and I have supported most of the tenant protections thus far. The problem is that tenants now know that they do not need to pay rent – even if they have not suffered any financial loss due to Covid. I have a tenant who has not paid rent the last two months. He is still working full time, at the same job. He has received COVID relief payments from the federal government. He has simply decided to take advantage of the situation to not pay rent. There is literally nothing I can do about this. This is 50% of my business income and it makes a huge difference in my ability to pay the mortgage, maintain the property, and keep the utilities on. I am not the only landlord reporting that their tenants are taking advantage of the situation.

It is not fair to leave landlords holding the bag at the end, when tenants simply give notice and move out, owing thousands of dollars. Small claims courts may rule in favor of a landlord, but good luck getting any money... We will not even be able to report that they failed to pay after the grace period.

Again, punitive to landlords, advantageous to tenants. I oppose SB282-1

If the Oregon Legislature truly values rental housing providers, especially the “mom and pop” owners, they need to stop punishing them and start supporting them. If not, we will simply sell to corporate owners who place profits above relationships and will make it even harder for tenants to get a helping hand when needed.

As for me, I have reached my limit. The risk completely outweighs the rewards so I plan to sell in 2022. I am very disappointed in the lack of support coming from the city and the state.

Thank you for considering my testimony.