



To: Senate Committee on Housing and Development
From: Paige Spence, Washington County Government Relations Manager
Date: March 4, 2021
Re: Support for SB 282-1

Dear Chair Jama, and Committee Members:

Thank you for hearing SB 282-1, which would provide needed protections to keep Washington County residents and other Oregonians stably housed. Losing their home in the middle of a pandemic is a fate no one should face. Evictions precipitate homelessness and negatively impact health. Washington County, as a housing provider and a public health authority, knows that having a safe place to self-isolate or quarantine if needed during the COVID-19 pandemic is a public health issue.

The COVID-19 pandemic has precipitated catastrophic job loss, unprecedented unemployment rates, and severe economic hardship in renter households. As a result, housing precarity and the risk of eviction increased and worsened during the pandemic, especially among people of color and low-income populations.

SB 282-1 is an important component of pandemic relief with its comprehensive protections for renters. The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic crisis have brought to light the fundamental role housing plays in people's lives and the life and death implications when they cannot afford the rent. Even before the pandemic, millions of individuals and families were homeless or struggling to pay the rent; the health and economic crises have deepened these problems.

Thank you for considering this important bill and Washington County's testimony.

Paige Spence
Paige_spence@co.washington.or.us
503-839-9360 (cell)