



March 4, 2021

To: Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Linthicum and members of the Senate Housing and Development Committee:

The Housing Authorities of Oregon are the largest providers of affordable housing in the state of Oregon. There are 22 Housing Authorities that serve all 36 counties. Our goal is to provide a safe, affordable place for Oregonians with low incomes to call home.

We write to express our support for extending the grace period for repayment of back-rent to February of 2022. Housing authorities are unique in that we are landlords, managing over \$17,000 affordable rental units across the state, and we run the federal Housing Choice Voucher program which provides over \$250 million in rental payments to private landlords every biennium on behalf of low-income tenants.

Further, housing authorities are taking on a new role in response to the pandemic through our partnership with the state to roll out the Landlord Compensation Fund, which will provide an additional \$150 million in state funds to compensate landlords for unpaid rent during the eviction moratorium.

We know that, significant as the state and federal investments in emergency rent assistance have been to date, there is still a large unmet need and we know that many more federal resources will be coming. Recent experience with the CARES act demonstrates that it will take time for new federal funds to reach Oregon, and the sheer volume of funds that must be distributed will also take time to distribute in a manner that meets federal guidelines.

All of this is to say that extending the grace period will be critical to maximizing the value of the federal relief and maintaining housing stability for so many Oregonians.

SB 282 contains many other good provisions. Particularly important is the bill's protection of credit history reports with respect to non-payment of rent. This will help mute the future resonance of this past year's economic devastation.

Coos-Curry/North Bend City  
Housing Authority

Home Forward (Multnomah County)

Homes for Good (Lane County)

Housing Authority of Clackamas County

Housing Authority of Douglas County

Housing Authority of Jackson County

Housing Authority of Lincoln County

Housing Authority of Malheur County

Housing Authority of the County of  
Umatilla

Housing Authority of Washington County

Housing Authority of Yamhill County

Housing Works (Central Oregon)

Josephine Housing & Community  
Development Council

Klamath County Housing Authority

Linn Benton Housing Authority

Marion County Housing Authority

Mid-Columbia Housing Authority

Northeast Oregon Housing Authority

Northwest Oregon Housing Authority

Salem Housing Authority

Vancouver Housing Authority

West Valley Housing Authority



HAO advocates for policies and resources that create safe, stable housing options for all Oregonians [housingauthoritiesoforegon.com](https://housingauthoritiesoforegon.com)

We are working with the proponents to make sure that language on the guest policy is in line with the state and federal requirements connected to the funding that makes the units we manage affordable to our residents with low and very low incomes. We are also working with them to find a way for housing authorities to consider evictions for causes other than non-payment of rent during the COVID period when reviewing rental applications.

Thank you for receiving our testimony, and taking up this important legislation.

For further information, please contact:

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