

March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021

I am submitting a testimony in vehement opposition to SB 282. As a licensed property manager in the State of Oregon, and as a consumer, single parent, life-long Oregonian, and humanist, I feel that extending the moratorium through February of 2022 will not help anyone and will in fact create more problems.

My tenants, for the most part, have worked very hard to pay their rent, or at least keep in contact with me regarding their rent through this pandemic. I do have several that have not paid their rent since April of 2020. I cannot imagine how the tenants with almost a year-worth of unpaid rent will manage to come up with almost TWO years of rent funds by February 2022. This is setting the tenants up for absolute failure. It is also giving the tenants that decided to participate in a rent strike the ammunition to continue maliciously not paying their rent.

My owners should be paid for the service they provide - housing. Much like a grocery store, goods are exchanged for funds. A person cannot walk into a store, bag up what they need, and leave without paying until February 2022. Yet, food is an essential item necessary for survival, much like housing. So why are landlords expected to not collect funds on a service they provide with no end in sight, but grocery stores are still allowed to charge full price for what they offer. Why are medical bills still being charged and sent to collections if left unpaid in the time of a pandemic when people need medical services the most? Why are utility companies allowed to demand payments for services at this time as well? Why should all of the sacrifice land on the shoulders of property owners?

I do agree that tenants need help. They need more help than the Landlord Compensation Fund will allow. They need more help than what CSC and other agencies can provide. They need assurance that their rent will be PAID, and owners also need assurance that they will receive payment.

A point I feel is overlooked is that if landlords and property management companies continue to not receive rent, they will not be able to pay their employees, and people will lose their jobs and their ability to pay their rent. Overhead from operating will force this to happen. There will be more people claiming unemployment, and more people facing the loss of their housing.

Lastly, and quite frankly, I feel that landlords are unfairly viewed as villains and are being treated as such. The bias against landlords is astounding and shameful. Passing this bill will show clearly that landlords and people that own property are victims of prejudice that has been imposed upon them simply because they have invested in property. For example, my father has a neighbor that owns one rental. She is a retired individual who depends on the rent from her investment property. Her tenants have decided to take part in the rent strike because they openly feel people shouldn't own and rent land

for monetary gain, thus rendering her unable to pay her bills. This is a common occurrence that unfortunately is not being taken into consideration with this bill.

The burden of housing tenants should not fall on those who are providing the housing. The State of Oregon and/or the Federal Government should pay for the tenants with hardship to stay in their homes. With the vaccine being made available to all here very soon, there is absolutely NO reason we cannot start getting back to some type of normalcy. I can see extending the moratorium through the end of the summer, absolutely, but to extend it through next year is outrageous. Landlords cannot be expected to sustain these losses seemingly indefinitely. The answer to this crisis needs to come in the way of funding from the government directly to the tenants and landlords.

Thank you for your time in reading my testimony. I sincerely hope it is heard with an open mind and understanding.

Sincerely,

Brigid Austin

At Home Properties, Inc.