



CITY OF

PORTLAND, OREGON

Ted Wheeler, Mayor
Carmen Rubio, Commissioner
Dan Ryan, Commissioner
Jo Ann Hardesty, Commissioner
Mingus Mapps, Commissioner

March 15, 2021

Senate President Peter Courtney
House Speaker Tina Kotek
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear President Courtney and Speaker Kotek,

We write to request immediate action to help Oregon's small businesses. Collectively, we must continue to use every tool at our disposal to stabilize the economy and promote an equitable recovery for all Oregonians. The six-month repayment grace period for commercial tenants, established in HB 4213 last year, is set to expire at the end of this month. The reality is that coming aid will not reach businesses before the repayment period expires.

We urge you to act expeditiously to extend this grace period to September 30th, 2021 to give our local businesses time to access funding from Business Oregon's Commercial Rent Relief Program and the resources coming from the American Rescue Plan. Businesses across Oregon are still struggling to survive and adapt during this protracted public health emergency, and businesses owned by BIPOC Oregonians are particularly vulnerable to this severe disruption in the economy. We cannot allow their last line of protection to expire before they can take advantage of these critical funding lifelines.

Small businesses are part of the fabric of our communities. They employ our families, friends, and neighbors. We strongly support an extension of the repayment period for commercial tenants as we do for residential tenants. This will benefit workers by keeping more people employed as businesses receive supports that help them endure the late stages of this crisis.

As more Oregonians are vaccinated and COVID-19 cases continue to decline, we must not forget that our residents and businesses continue to struggle through the impacts of this pandemic. Aid is on the way. We urge you to act swiftly to extend the repayment period and give our local businesses the opportunity to access funding that will bridge survival to recovery.

Sincerely,


Ted Wheeler
Mayor


Jo Ann Hardesty
Commissioner


Carmen Rubio
Commissioner


Mingus Mapps
Commissioner


Dan Ryan
Commissioner

CC: Senate Majority Leader Rob Wagner
Senate Republican Leader Fred Girod
House Majority Leader Barbara Smith Warner
House Republican Leader Christine Drazen