

Statement in support of SB 330

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Bill Stevenson  
4792 N. Amherst St.  
Portland OR 97203

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. My wife and I own a small apartment in north Portland and have been providing affordable housing long before that term became the major issue that it is today. We have never evicted anyone and understand the need during this pandemic for eviction moratoriums. However, they do represent a taking by government. As such the government has a responsibility and obligation to pay for the losses it has caused as a result.

The landlord compensation fund, hereafter referred to as the LCF, enacted during the recent special session, is inadequate to its stated purpose. It is insufficiently funded, and continues to allow a 20% taking—and more by excluding utility costs—without compensation. It is a complicated system to navigate for many small operators who are not tech savvy and provides no alternative way for such individuals to apply.

SB 330 is a superior vehicle to address the issue. It solves a tenant's problem and provides a means to compensate landlords for the losses caused by the government's actions. However, it does appear to need either amendment or clarification on two points.

First, the "emergency period" is referred to as from April 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020. The means to compensate landlords appears limited to that time period. As I understand it, the moratorium extends to July 1, 2021. What about the six month period from January 1, 2021 to July 1, 2021? How will landlords be compensated for that time period? The bill needs to include this time span as well.

Second, it seems advisable to not have a termination date for the legislation be at the end of the fifth year in case any given taxpayer based on the tax amount they owe in a given year or years was unable to fully recover their loss. This would perhaps best apply particularly to small operators.

As a former member of both the House and Senate, serving in the positions now held by Speaker Kotek and Senator Frederick respectively, and as a former Oregon Labor Commissioner, I understand your roles in making best public policy judgments among often competing interests. SB 330 is a measure that will allow you to do that. I urge its support and passage. Thank you.