



Senator Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the committee,

My name is Cameron Coval and I am the Executive Director of Pueblo Unido PDX, a nonprofit that connects communities with vulnerable immigration status to legal, social, and Indigenous language interpretation services. Since our formation in 2017, housing instability has remained one of the most pressing issues for the communities we serve. I am writing today in support of SB 799.

Reducing evictions is an essential part of our housing and homelessness response. As Governor Kotek and legislative leadership commit to increasing the supply and rehousing of our neighbors, we must also ensure that the people who are housed today do not end up houseless tomorrow.

Evictions often impact the most vulnerable communities, which includes Oregon's immigrant and refugee communities. Pueblo Unido has helped connect many community members who have experienced an eviction or who are on the brink of houselessness to critical services that have helped them to remain in their homes, including by providing financial assistance towards over 100 rent payments.

However, evictions for non-payment of rent are still skyrocketing. In some cases, landlords have even refused to accept our offers of financial assistance, opting instead to pursue eviction in order to lease to new tenants at higher rent rates.

The Legislature took important steps over the course of the pandemic to prevent many Oregonians from losing access to their housing. Now, the Legislature can apply the lessons learned during the pandemic to ameliorate our current situation.

SB 799 is an approach that will give people who are behind on their rent a reasonable amount of time to catch up and receive rent assistance. Coupled with additional funding for the housing system, SB799 will help reduce the number of Oregonians who are facing eviction.

As an organization that works directly with Oregon's immigrant and refugee communities, we know that this bill will help keep some of our most impacted community members housed. Pueblo Unido urges your support of SB 799, and we thank you for your consideration of this important bill.

Sincerely,

Cameron Coval
Executive Director
Pueblo Unido PDX