



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

DATE: January 30, 2023
TO: Chair Jama and Members of the Committee of Housing and Development
FROM: Kimberly McCullough, Legislative Director
Oregon Department of Justice
SUBJECT: SB 799 Residential tenancies; declaring emergency

This testimony is presented in support of SB 799.

A crucial component of our housing and homelessness response is reducing evictions. In addition to increasing the housing supply and rehousing houseless Oregonians, we also need to ensure that people who currently are housed don't end up on the streets.

Evictions for non-payment have reached unprecedented levels. Each month between when the pandemic protections expired in October 2022 and December 2022, there were an average of 2,155 court evictions. This number represents a 43 percent spike from the average monthly rate before the pandemic, which was approximately 1,500 court evictions a month. Further, more than 80 percent of these eviction filings were because rent was late.

We must reduce eviction rates and ensure that when they do happen, their procedures are fair. During the pandemic, this is exactly what the legislature did. The legislature's pandemic protections reduced eviction rates and protected more people from displacement.

It is time to take those lessons learned from the pandemic and permanently reinstate SB 799.

SB 799 is a fair approach that gives individuals who have fallen behind on their rent payments a reasonable amount of time to catch up. Further, if these individuals need it, SB 799 will help them to locate, apply and receive rent assistance.

This bill will address the reality in Oregon that evictions are too fast. We must give people a chance to protect their homes.

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