



January 30, 2023

To: Sen. Jama, Chair, Senate Committee on Housing and Development

From: Em Braman, Chair, Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition

RE: SB 799 Support-Providing basic protections for Oregonians who rent their homes

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Chair Jama and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition (DD Coalition) is a group of approximately 36 organizations across Oregon that promote quality services, equality and community integration for Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families. We also have individual members who are self-advocates and family members of people who experience intellectual or developmental disabilities. We offer strong support for SB 799 which will allow basic protections and stability for Oregonians who rent their homes.

We are particularly interested in the following provisions of SB 799:

- Safe harbor provisions that would allow protection from eviction for non-payment for tenants who have applied for assistance, and
- 10-day nonpayment termination notice period allowing 10 days for tenants to seek information and assistance to avoid the need for an eviction filing. This is a dramatic improvement over the current 72-hour time period.

Housing gives all people the opportunity to build better lives. To succeed, you need a safe, appropriate and affordable place to call home. People with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families share similar stories with other Oregonians who rent their homes and struggle to understand and access support in eviction proceedings.

In a 2021 survey, people with developmental disabilities said they often do not understand notices from their landlord. They reach out to multiple people ranging from family and friends to case managers and community resources and others before they get enough information to understand the notices. Having 10 days to gather support would allow them to get the information they need so they can then apply for resources to avoid eviction. The current 72-hour timeline does not allow them enough time to connect with and coordinate resources and information to understand and prevent eviction.



Additionally, safe harbor provisions preventing eviction for non-payment of rent would allow people with developmental disabilities to get access to rental assistance. One of our members supports someone with developmental disabilities who did not understand the notice from their landlord, applied for rental assistance to pay rent, but then moved out because the rent assistance application was pending when the compliance timeline on the original eviction notice was up. They did not get the chance to benefit from the safe harbor provisions. As a result, they have been homeless off and on for the past two years.

For people experiencing disabilities and their families, home means a stable, appropriate and affordable place where they can have supports to live and work as valued members of Oregon communities. When their home is threatened by eviction, their supports are jeopardized or interrupted. Without supports, their ability to be community members is destabilized. When people lose or delay their supports, they risk losing their jobs, relationships and community connections – which are the major aspects of being a community member.

In 2019, two of our members held focus groups around Oregon to hear from the intellectual and developmental disabilities community about what home means to them. The preliminary results are striking: housing stability matters. Affordability matters. The ability to continue to live where you are successful matters.

Our members heard from self-advocates and families that finding the right housing that is appropriate, decent and affordable is a major reason that self-advocates are able to work and live as valued community members. Our members also saw the extreme stress and feeling of powerlessness when people talked about having a home that worked for them, but feeling it was under threat constantly by unstable rental markets.

Oregon has a long history of supporting people experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities to be community members, living and working alongside their neighbors. Housing is a critical component of living in community. SB 799 would make community living a stable reality for thousands of Oregonians with DD.

Now, Oregon has the opportunity to pass SB 799 and stabilize housing opportunity for people who rent their homes, which includes thousands of Oregonians with intellectual or developmental disabilities. We hear the urgency from our communities across Oregon – there is no time to wait.