

Chair Fahey, Vice-Chair Winsley Campos, Vice-Chair Morgan, Members of the Committee,

Re: Support for SB 282A, Tenant COVID Protections

I want to thank you for taking up SB 282A. I am one of the tens of thousands of Oregonians renters who have struggled financially during the COVID pandemic. I am in strong support of SB 282A as it provides essential protections to tenants after the eviction moratorium expires June 30 of this year.

I am so grateful for the work that has happened so far to protect tenants. The eviction moratorium is the only reason that my girlfriend and I have a roof over our heads. I support SB 282A because it is a critical step towards stabilizing renter households. The bill has gone through significant work and a number of amendments. It ensures that there is time for state and federal assistance to reach landlords and resolve back rent debt, has no opposition, and received strong bipartisan support in the Senate.

A couple months ago, my girlfriend and I both got sick with COVID. With inconsistent work and being sick, we've fallen behind several months in rent and it's really stressful. The more we fall behind on rent, the less likely it is we'll be able to pay it all back in time in June. Without SB 282A, I might lose my home just because I got COVID and fell behind on rent. I can't imagine what it would feel like to get a letter in the mail, an eviction notice, that says this is no longer my home and good luck on the streets.

We need to make sure that Oregon's recovery process doesn't leave anyone out. Tenants like myself, as well as working families, BIPOC renters, and blue-collar workers who have borne the brunt of the pandemic. We need to protect our entire community. There are dim prospects for recovering lost income and it will be some time before employment rates return to normal. SB 282A could allow me and renters across Oregon to remain in our beloved homes.

COVID has been an unprecedented and challenging time and, despite our communities' resilience, we are still fighting hard to stay in our homes. Please pass SB 282A and allow me and my neighbors time to get caught up and keep a roof over our heads. Thank you.

Austin Orth
Yachats, Oregon