

Submitter: E Golden

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB799

I am writing in opposition to SB799.

I own and manage a single duplex apartment in Southeast Portland. We can all agree the last few years have been challenging for both landlords and tenants. I consistently worked with my tenants so they could remain housed during the Covid emergency, including encouraging application for rental assistance, accepting late and partial payments, and other accommodations. I have not increased rents since 2019 despite increasing utilities, taxes, and maintenance costs. I have been patiently awaiting the end of the emergency period, and I thought we were finally there.

Now SB799 seeks to reinstate policies that would delay due process for landlords and allow bad faith tenants to game the system. In its most extreme scenario, a tenant could live rent free for up to five months and then simply move out to avoid an eviction judgement, leaving the landlord uncompensated. And this does not include legal costs incurred in the eviction process.

This is grossly unjust and unfair to the rental housing providers you so desperately need in order to provide safe, clean, and stable housing. Small housing providers rely on regular income to repay their loan, maintain the property and also as personal income.

We are not large corporations with millions of dollars in cash flow. We are small business operators. I cannot imagine a proposed house bill that mandated grocery stores to provide free food to their customers and then wait for them to apply for reimbursement.

SB799 also assumes available rental assistance. WHAT ASSISTANCE? OERAP has a notice on their website that no assistance is available. 211info.org makes clear that there are very limited dollars in assistance funds these days and they are hard to access for many tenants.

SB799 calls for declaring an emergency. What is the emergency that SB799 will actually resolve? Tenants and Housing Providers all over Oregon agree that the emergency is a lack of affordable housing. This bill does not one thing to address this and could serve to increase rents even more, and drive small rental operators out of the business.

SB799 is yet another effort to resolve our housing issues without engagement from actual housing providers. It is essential to include us as part of the solution. I

strongly urge you to reconvene a group representing housing providers, tenants, and rental housing developers in order to find workable solutions that serve all the parties and make Oregon a better home for everyone.