



Re: Protect Rent Assistance Tenants from Eviction and Ensure Distribution of Federal Dollars

June 15 2021

Sent via 2021 Regular Session Testimony Submission Form

Dear House Committee on Health Care:

Dear House Rules Committee:

On behalf of Project Access NOW (PANOW), I write to express gratitude for your quick response to the unprecedented situation facing Oregon. PANOW is a non-profit in the tri-county area with a mission to improve our communities' health and well-being by creating access to care, services, and resources for those most in need. We offer a suite of programs that promote access to care and social services, regardless of an individual's insurance status or type. Across all programs, our clients are largely low-income, from immigrant populations, non-English-speaking, and/or undocumented.

Access to safe and affordable housing is closely linked to health outcomes. For both children and adults, the quality, affordability, stability, and location of home are seen not just as important factors but as foundational to health and well-being. Oregon has hundreds of millions of dollars for rent assistance that are not in the hands of our community fast enough. **When the eviction moratorium ends on June 30th, there will be no protections for people who cannot pay rent after July 1. This could have dramatic impacts on the health and wellbeing of our communities.**

The post-COVID recovery has not yet come for too many Oregon families. 17% of Oregon renters and 24% of parents or guardians said they could not pay June rent according to the most recent U.S. Census Pulse Survey. We have seen first-hand how important housing is in the face of the pandemic. **Our C3 Community Assistance Program, which connects low-income people to the resources they need for safe hospital or emergency room discharge and a return to wellness, has provided housing supports close to \$800,000 in the last 4 years. The amount of rental assistance requested via C3CAP went up exponentially in 2020; almost 400% increase in the number of requests.**

We understand the impact housing has on health and **we are supportive of SB 278 that would alleviate untold hardships from the sunset of the moratorium ending on June 30.** We are excited at the step in the process and look forward to continuing to be a partner to our community partners and members.

Thank you,

Carly Hood-Ronick MPA, MPH
Executive Director