



April 27, 2021

House Committee on Housing and Development
Oregon Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

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

I write to you on behalf of Home Forward in support of Senate Bill 282A. Home Forward is a Public Housing Authority (PHA) and the largest provider of affordable housing in the state of Oregon. Home Forward owns almost 6,000 units of affordable housing and as a landlord, we strongly support this measure. We serve about 17,000 households total and in addition to providing affordable housing, we also provide supportive services, and administer short and long-term rent assistance.

Given the influx of federal rent assistance dollars coming to the State to support tenants and landlords, extending the grace period is essential to ensure that tenants have time to access those resources to cover any rent they could not pay because of the pandemic. In addition to supporting the delivery of incoming federal resources, Home Forward appreciates the opportunity to collaborate with Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) to administer the \$150 million dollars that the legislature allocated to the Landlord Compensation Fund. The majority of COVID specific rent assistance funds coming to Oregon are coming from the two federal allocations of \$25 and \$21 billion. The Treasury Department announced that Oregon would receive \$281 million of the first federal allocation but has still not announced how much money will come to Oregon from the second round of funds. These federal and state investments have the potential to prevent a wave of evictions but as you know, not all of the funds are here yet and providers need time to get these resources out of the door. The grace period in SB282A is essential to making sure this significant public investment in rent assistance is not wasted and successfully prevents eviction and compensates landlords for unpaid rent.

We also strongly support the provisions to ensure that non-payment and late rent payments during the pandemic will not be included on credit reports. People who have been impacted by a global public health emergency should not be screened out of housing opportunities as a result.

We urge the swift passage of Senate Bill 282A.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide support for SB282A today.

Sincerely,

Taylor Smiley Wolfe
Director of Policy and Planning
Home Forward