

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

Re: Support for SB 282A, Tenant COVID Protections

I am a single mom and I, like so many other moms and families, have gone through so much in the last year. Thank you for taking up SB 282A. I am in strong support of this bill, which provides essential protections to tenants after the eviction moratorium expires.

Until recently, my daughter and I were living with my mom after I left a 6-year abusive relationship. I had finally secured a place for me and my four-year-old daughter. Then, COVID happened and I had to stop working. I work as a hair stylist. I was lucky to have some savings but by October I had drained them all. I've accumulated over \$5,000 in rental debt. Surveys show that it's not just me, Oregonians across the state are going to great lengths to pay our rent—making sacrifices, suing savings, and borrowing money. With the \$500 million in federal rental assistance that will be distributed in the coming months, we need time to ensure there is time for it to reach landlords and resolve back rent.

This isn't my fault. It's not anybody's fault. I didn't choose to not pay rent. The more debt that I accrue, the more I'm going to owe at once come July. I'm doing my best to get on my feet—I'm in school. I'm trying to find work. The state and federal rental assistance will allow payments to be made directly to landlords and can serve to pay back-due, current, or future rent. Having the time for these funds to kick in would be a lifesaver for me.

I live in a neighborhood full of families. They all have kids and they're all in the same situation as me. Working moms, single parents, and working class renters are already the hardest hit by the pandemic. We're trying to figure out caring for our kids without any childcare or support. The job market hasn't recovered and isn't expected to fully do so until 2023. So many of us have fallen behind. We need time to access support, to pay our rent back, and to stabilize our families.

So many of us have already lost so much and, as we move into the next stage of the COVID pandemic, it's unfathomable to imagine losing our homes too. I urge you to pass SB 282A and protect all of the Oregon families out there trying to get by in these unprecedented times.

Thank you.

Chevelle Barham
Tigard, OR