



April 27, 2021

House Committee on Housing
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support SB 282A

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

Our Children Oregon's (OCO) mission is to be a voice and force for the common good for all Oregon children, ensuring all children have the resources and opportunities they need to reach their full potential. OCO is the result of the merger between two historic Oregon non-profits: The Children's Trust Fund of Oregon and Children First for Oregon. We elevate data and lived experience to prioritize children and center communities. We continue to connect a community of 115 advocates, coalitions, and organizations through The Children's Agenda, a legislative agenda championing equitable state legislative policies and shared investments to improving the lives of Oregon's children and their families.

Protecting Kids and Families from Evictions and Instability after the eviction moratorium ends on June 30 is part of the 2021 Children's Agenda, and SB 282A provides the path and tools to help us achieve that goal.

The bill will stabilize renter households, and ensure that there is time for state and federal rent assistance to reach landlords and resolve back rent debt by extending the grace period to pay COVID-era back rent through February, 2022.

SB 282A passed the Senate on a 25 – 5 vote, after passing out of the Senate Housing and Development Committee with bipartisan support. The final amendments adopted in the Senate committee came from a workgroup of tenant advocates and landlord groups. SB 282A's final amendment had no opposition in the Senate.

SB 282A is needed to protect Oregon families. An estimated 11-16% of renters have fallen behind on rent. With dim prospects for recovering lost income, renting Oregonians need more time to stabilize their families. As more than half a billion dollars of state and federal tenant and landlord assistance are being distributed, we must ensure that people have time to

The Children's Agenda

is a broad slate of equitable investments and policy solutions to meet the holistic needs of Oregon children, youth, and their families.



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access assistance, and aren't unfairly evicted after the moratorium ends. A temporary setback during COVID shouldn't make it impossible to rent in the future.

- Our Black and Brown neighbors are at the greatest risk of lifelong harm from the COVID evictions. Discriminatory housing policies have made homeownership difficult and inaccessible, leaving people of color at higher risk of rental evictions even as higher rates of COVID exposure are leaving people ill and economically stressed.
 - For example, according to the U.S. Census Pulse Survey, 30% of Black renters are at risk of eviction because of concerns they can't pay next month's rent.

The [Pulse](#) survey also shows that Oregonians are going to great lengths to pay their rent - even during the moratorium - using savings, making sacrifices, borrowing money. But people need time to get caught up on back rent. We need to ensure Oregon's recovery doesn't leave anyone out. Working mothers, BIPOC Oregonians and blue-collar workers have borne the economic brunt of the pandemic both because they are most likely to have lost income, are more likely to rent their homes or are more likely to have contracted COVID.

Families need stability to provide for their children's education. Oregon already has one of the highest rates of student homelessness in the country. We cannot force families whose children have been learning remotely to lose stability, internet connection and the ability to keep their education going in the pandemic.

Thank you for your work, and we urge you to support SB 282A.

From the Our Children Oregon Team,

Chis Coughlin, Policy, Advocacy, and Community Engagement Director

Jenifer Wagley, Executive Director

View the 2021 Children's Agenda at www.ourchildrenoregon.org/2021-childrens-agenda