

March 3, 2021

Dear Housing and Development Committee Members,

I am writing today in opposition to SB 282-1, the proposal to extend various COVID pandemic related policies until February, 2022 or beyond. The company where I work, Commerce Properties, owns and manages rental housing in Washington and Multnomah counties. We have done so for over 70 years and are take great pride if offering quality apartment homes.

During the pandemic, we have worked closely with our residents to address their needs. We have offered long term payment plans and set up a rent relief fund for people who experienced significant income declines due to COVID. For the most part, our residents have been happy to work with us and appreciated the flexibility we offered them in managing their rent obligations.

There are a handful of residents who have taken advantage of the eviction moratorium to cease rent payments completely and refuse to communicate with us. They are occupying their apartments for free and there is nothing we can do about it. We understand the legislature's intent when passing earlier laws was not to enable such behavior. The fact is, though, that some people are using this as an opportunity to get something for nothing.

It is vitally important that property owners have the ability to reclaim their rental housing if someone does not pay rent. For this reason, we need to bring Oregon's eviction moratorium to a timely closure. Given Oregon's success in limiting COVID's spread and the increasing pace of vaccinations, I think that the current June 30th date remains a reasonable target for all parties concerned. For this reason, I urge you to vote "No" on SB 282-1.

Sincerely,

Malcolm McIver
President
Commerce Properties