

February 27, 2021

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to implore you to support SB330 which will permit housing providers to receive a tax credit if they forgive deferred rent for tenants who have not been able to pay their rent due to COVID.

I am an independent housing provider and property manager. Many of the tenants I provide housing and services to are struggling. And their housing providers are struggling too. My clients are not wealthy real estate moguls. My clients are people who own one or maybe two properties at most. For many, their single rental property is a home they used to live in. Some of my clients are retired and rely on the rental income from their property for their monthly living expenses. Some are supporting elderly relatives. Some are supporting special needs children. Almost all my owners have day jobs. None are of them are rich. My owners are nurses, retired educators, social workers, and journalists.

Some of my owners have not received rent in months. I have one owner who had to take a second job in order to cover the mortgage for her rental home because her tenants have been unable to pay rent. This owner has two special needs children to support. Her children are suffering because she is never home to care for them. Her mortgage does not qualify for mortgage deferment. She doesn't want to lose her rental house, so she has no choice but to work two jobs.

Another owner I manage for is a retired educator. His tenants are not able to pay rent, and PGE contacted me to tell me that the home needs a new base immediately. The cost is \$3500. With no rent coming in, this owner is faced with a dire financial crisis.

I have shared these stories with you to impress upon you that the housing providers who are forced to absorb substantial losses due to tenants being unable to pay rent are ordinary people. They are your neighbors, your friends, your community members. They are not wealthy investors with deep pockets. They are barely holding onto their property and are truly suffering from the loss of income. Please keep in mind that housing providers must continue to make repairs and provide services whether they are collecting rent or not. Over the last few months I have been in the unhappy position of having to ask my clients to send me funds to cover the most basic services such as garage service and necessary repairs because no rent is coming in. Drains need to be snaked, roofs need to be repaired, toilets need to be replaced, appliances need to be replaced, hot water heaters and furnaces need to be replaced whether rent is being paid or not. The recent snowstorm caused damage to a number of the homes I manage making some uninhabitable until repairs could be completed. This escalated the financial hardship for housing providers some of whom had to put tenants up in hotels and cover the cost of the accommodations until repair crews were able to make the repairs. And these owners also had to pay for the repairs.

It is crucial that independent landlords have some means of recovering from what is for many a substantial loss of essential income. SB330 would offer these housing providers tax relief to help offset their income loss. SB330 would also relieve tenants who have been deferring rent from the obligation to repay the balance due. This would keep tenants in their homes rather than facing eviction, collections, or both. Furthermore, SB330 would not require funds to be diverted from any other services. I urge you to support this bill which will support housing.