

**JEFF GOLDEN**  
**STATE SENATOR**  
DISTRICT 3



**OREGON STATE SENATE**

June 29, 2020

VOTE EXPLANATION: HB 4213A, CAST ON JUNE 26, 2020

I voted "Aye" on HB 4213A to extend and codify residential and commercial evictions because I view as catastrophic the prospect of enhancing houselessness in Oregon as Covid-19 infection rates continue and increase. That outcome must be prevented at virtually all costs.

I am, however, disappointed at the failure to significantly consider a straightforward, relatively simple option for reducing the burden this bill will place on Oregon landlords. That burden was partially addressed by our passage of HB 4204, a moratorium on foreclosures that should protect landlords from losing their properties if rental non-payments make it impossible for them to make mortgage payments. But the practical effect of HB 4213A is that some landlords will be owed as much as six months' rent on September 30, 2020, without having adequate payment security from their tenants. Some landlords will likely suffer financial loss.

This exposure to loss could have been narrowed by incorporating suggestions to tie eviction protection to health or economic effects of the pandemic. A proposed -4 Amendment would have required the tenant to provide some form of documentation, e.g, a note from an employer or medical provider, a communication from the Employment Department, etc, to be protected from eviction. That amendment was not seriously discussed. And attempts to spur discussion of a less demanding option, such as an undocumented written statement from a tenant that the inability to pay rent had linkage to the pandemic, were unsuccessful.

I believe HB 4213A would have been better more balanced if it had included some attempt to tie rental non-payment to the Covid crisis that the special session was convened to address. It could well be that a majority of my colleagues would not, in the end, have agreed with me on the substance of this matter. But the absence of any material discussion of this option, given the potential impact of HB 4213A on Oregon's community of small-scale landlords, does not reflect well on our legislative process.

Respectfully,

Senator Jeff Golden  
Senate District 3