



**OREGON STATE SENATE**

I am very aware that the pandemic has caused a lot of strain on Oregonians and am empathetic towards the plight of those who might not be able to afford their rent due to the loss of employment because of it. That being said I do have some grave concerns about the ability for homeowners to pay their mortgages if their renters are not paying their rent. While some assistance might be necessary to ensure Oregonians can stay in their houses, without legislation to also ensure that the landlords are not being left to pay the bill without assistance this does not seem like a fair approach.

The Constitution of the State of Oregon clearly states that “The deliberations of each house, of committees of each house or joint committees and of committees of the whole, shall be open...” This provision was put in place to ensure accountability and transparency to the people of the state that their Legislature was working in their best interest. The virtual format that is being used does not provide for an honest, open, and transparent discussion on the matters of this state.

We are seeing just how discriminatory these virtual sessions can be! The Majority Party has created a system that if you cannot afford internet you cannot be a part of the discussions. This “Pay to Play” approach is NOT the Oregon way. Between this and the heartbreaking examples of the elder and economically depressed members in our society struggling and getting frustrated over their challenges navigating this virtual environment, it cannot honestly be said that we are doing the peoples work.

The “People’s Work” should be considered an essential service and there for accessible in person. Due to the unequal approach of offering assistance and because the people are still being denied their constitutional right to participate and lobby their legislature in an open manner, I cannot legitimize this session with a yes vote, and there for had to vote no.