



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Senate Democrats Pass Legislation to Prevent Evictions and Keep Oregonians Housed

SALEM – Today, the Oregon Senate convened in a Special Session of the Legislature to vote on and pass Senate Bill 891, legislation that will prevent thousands of evictions during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and upcoming winter months. The bill extends the safe harbor period for tenants who have applied for rental assistance and provides support for Oregon’s rental assistance program.

“Since the start of this pandemic, our state has been committed to keeping Oregonians in their homes during this crisis by launching mortgage and rental assistance programs and enacting foreclosure and eviction protections,” said Senator Kayse Jama (D-Portland), chair of the Senate Housing Committee and a lead proponent of SB 891. “Today we passed SB 891 to prevent evictions of tenants who are waiting for assistance, as well as allowing more tenants to apply for assistance and ensuring landlords are fully paid.”

Senate Bill 891 extends the “safe harbor” provisions in Senate Bill 278 from the end of February 2022 to June 30, 2022. The “safe harbor” will last while their rental assistance application is being processed, but no later than September 30, 2022.

The Senate also passed Senate Bill 5561, which contains allocations and investments in key priorities for Senate Democrats, includes:

- \$100 million in additional emergency rental assistance to ensure low-income tenants have access to housing in the winter.
- \$100 million to support partnerships with existing programs as Oregon transitions from large-scale pandemic-related emergency rental assistance to long-term, locally-delivered eviction prevention services.
- An additional \$10 million to the Landlord Guarantee Fund to reimburse landlords for non-payment of rent and other fees incurred during the safe harbor period.

- \$5 million to speed up the delivery of federal funds

“Senate Democrats stepped up to ensure that Oregonians from across the state—whether they live in a rural, suburban or urban community—will all benefit from these important housing protections,” said Senate Majority Leader Rob Wagner (D-Lake Oswego). “I commend the crucial work by the Legislature’s Housing Committee Chairs, Senator Kayse Jama and Representative Julie Fahey, and thank them for working diligently to protect vulnerable Oregonians.”

Senate Bill 891 and Senate Bill 5561 will now move to the Oregon House of Representatives for consideration.

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