



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

Oregon State Legislature
State Capitol
Salem, Oregon

PRESS RELEASE

December 21, 2020

CONTACT: Amanda Kraus, 503-986-1074

Amanda.Kraus@oregonlegislature.gov

Oregon Senate Democrats Keep Oregonians Housed during the Public Health Emergency

SALEM – Today, Oregon Senate Democrats passed legislation to extend the moratorium on residential evictions and provide funding supports for landlords and tenants during the COVID-19 pandemic and economic recession. House Bill 4401 passed the Senate on a 18-6 vote.

“Oregon’s housing crisis preceded our current public health crisis and COVID-19 has exacerbated existing inequities – especially for those who were already one paycheck away from houselessness,” said Senator Shemia Fagan (D-Milwaukie) who has chaired the Senate Committee on Housing for the last two Legislative Sessions. “We voted to prevent tens of thousands of Oregonians from losing their homes in the middle of winter and a surge in the pandemic.”

Under House Bill 4401, tenants will need to attest that they have faced financial hardship in order to qualify for an extension of the eviction moratorium. The bill also creates the Landlord Compensation Fund, which will allow landlords to apply for grants to compensate for the lost income from rent. If the Department of Housing and Community Services approves a grant to a landlord, the compensation fund will grant the landlord 80% of the rent they are owed with the agreement that the landlord will forgive the remaining 20% of the unpaid rent and that their tenants will be made current on their payments.

“I appreciate the careful crafting of HB 4401 to keep our neighbors housed and offer some immediate relief to landlords who need it most,” said Senator Lee Beyer (D-Springfield) who carried the bill on the Senate Floor. “Taking away housing right now would be wrong, and it would make our existing crises worse.”

A portion of Senate Bill 5731, which passed on the Senate Floor earlier today, allocates \$150 million to fund the new Landlord Compensation Fund and \$50 million to traditional tenant-based rental assistance programs.

“We must recognize the disproportionate impact the pandemic has had on our vulnerable neighbors, especially on their housing security,” said Senate Majority Leader Rob Wagner (D-Lake Oswego). “Nearly 20% of renters – a third of Black Oregonians, a quarter of our seniors and one in five families with children – could be evicted if we did not extend this moratorium.”

House Bill 4401 now goes to Governor Kate Brown for her signature.

###