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Multnomah County Chair

Ted Wheeler
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Dear neighbors,

Over the past month our community was subjected to a series of unprecedented severe weather events, which claimed lives, closed businesses, and disrupted transportation. Conditions were so harsh, Oregon Governor Kate Brown declared a state of emergency.

At the same time, a strong partnership between the city of Portland, Multnomah County and our business leaders led to an outpouring of support to help those who don't have a home and didn't have regular access to shelter.

We joined forces with community organizations and volunteers to open more than 700 emergency shelter spaces in community centers, churches, and office buildings. We dedicated another 100 beds of winter shelter that will stay open through May, thanks to a donation from the Menashe family and Greystar.

While we are bracing for another round of severe weather, and opening warming shelters this week, it is important that this partnership doesn't end. We hope that through continued partnership we can prevent additional human tragedies this winter.

In order to address the challenges that renters face from temporary disruptions in income, this year Portland, Multnomah County, and Home Forward directed over \$5.8 million of local, state, and federal resources into our shared short term rent assistance program and are actively working to identify additional rent assistance resources to make available to tenants in the coming months.

In turn, we are also asking landlords to work with their tenants when the rent comes due in February to find resolutions other than evictions if they come up short. For tenants who can show they worked fewer hours in January than in past months, we ask that landlords consider waiving late fees in February, and entering into voluntary payment plans to recover past due rent rather than issuing non-payment of rent notices and pursuing evictions.

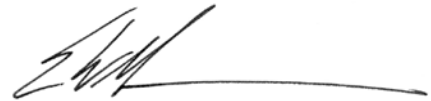
Many people in our community are bringing home incomplete paychecks this month because they couldn't safely make it to work, because they faced sudden child-care burdens with schools shut down, or because their employers were shuttered during the worst of the weather. We should work together to ensure that being a few dollars short doesn't lead to the trauma of homelessness.

The close coordination and hundreds of community volunteers we saw during the storm shows us what our community can do when we come together. We know we can continue working together now to improve lives.

Sincerely,



Deborah Kafoury
Chair, Multnomah County



Ted Wheeler
Mayor, City of Portland