



community alliance of tenants

Re: Support for SB 599A – Fair Housing for All Oregonians

Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Chozten and Wallan, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Alexis Ames, on behalf of The Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT), in support of SB 599A.

At CAT, we work with renters doing their best to stay housed while facing tough and often confusing housing issues. Many stay silent not just out of fear of losing their homes, but because they're afraid of being targeted for who they are or where they're from. This bill removes one more barrier for people who already carry far too many.

We support SB 599A because:

- Everyone deserves a fair shot at housing. No one should be turned away just because they don't have a Social Security number or were born outside the U.S.
- It protects tenants from retaliation and intimidation. Tenants are too often threatened with things like "I'll call ICE" when they ask for repairs or try to stand up for their rights. This bill makes it clear that immigration status cannot be used as a tool to scare or silence renters.
- It provides clear guidance on acceptable ID. Renters should be able to verify their identity with documents they already have, like an ITIN, passport, or even an expired ID. That's all that's needed. Anything more becomes a barrier.
- It builds on what's already working. Portland has had these protections since 2019, and they've worked. It's time to make them available across the entire state.
- It creates consistency for landlords. Clear rules help housing providers understand expectations and reduce liability. That benefits everyone.
- This is about dignity and stability. Many renters live in fear not only of eviction, but of what might happen if they speak up. This bill replaces fear with protection and confusion with clarity.

Opponents may argue this bill puts too much on landlords. But the reality is, many already follow these practices. SB 599A simply codifies best practices and ensures consistency across the state. Some may say it goes too far or gives special treatment, but this bill gives renters a fair chance at safe housing and helps Oregon avoid deepening our housing and homelessness crisis.

By removing barriers to housing, we also support key industries in our state. Immigrants are a vital part of Oregon's economy; they make up over 61% of our agricultural workforce and 13% of our entrepreneurs, according to the Oregon Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement. Many undocumented and mixed-status families are the backbone of Oregon's workforce. When people have stable housing, they're better able to contribute to their communities, raise their families, and show up for work. That's a win for Oregon.



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In this political moment, when so many are living with fear due to shifting federal policies, Oregon has the chance to lead with clarity, compassion, and common sense.

We hope you'll support this bill.

Thank you for your time and for standing with renters.

Sincerely,
Alexis Ames
Community Engagement Coordinator
Community Alliance of Tenants