

Support **Emergency Heat Relief for Renters/SB 1536**

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Chair Jama , and members of the committee..

My name is Jaime Carleton and I am a member of the Community Alliance of Tenants. I am a member on the policy committee and I am also a renter who has been impacted by the issues at the heart of SB 1536. That's why I'm testifying in support of this bill

I want to take the experiences I will share in my testimony to help other people not have those same challenges. Many people don't know they have rights to air conditioners through reasonable accommodation and many more don't know what the rules are when their landlord tells them they have to take out an air conditioner on the hottest day of the year.

SB 1536 helps people to understand their rights clearly and clarifies the rules between tenants and landlords around cooling while also strengthening protections that can help people stay healthy and safe in their homes. I believe that a person's life is more important than how a building looks. A landlord should not be allowed to ban air conditioners for cosmetic reasons that go beyond safety and security.

My story demonstrates why clarity around a renters right to cooling is so important.

The former manager at the property where I live violated my civil rights as a person with a disability by removing an air conditioner that was allowed through reasonable accommodation. I need an air conditioner because I have health problems that make hot weather especially dangerous for me. This was in part a follow up and retaliation to another civil rights violation related to my Jewish faith I am a daughter and family of Holocaust Survivors and was discriminated against.

After I pointed out my rights, the property manager tried to charge me to have my air conditioner put back in my apartment, which further violated my rights through reasonable accommodation. Senator Sara Gelser -Blouin and Fair Housing Council of Oregon wrote letters to help stick up for my rights. I Filed a civil rights case because this violated my rights as a person with a disability. But not everyone knows who to turn to when this kind of situation happens, what their rights are, or feels safe to take action.

And even for me, this conflict has had long-lasting impacts that make it more difficult to advocate for my other rights because of the potential consequences or retaliation. The housing authority could pick on me further for filing my civil rights case and I could lose my housing. Because the Housing Authority raised my rent 5 times higher after I filed my Civil Rights case with HUD. Also since filing this case I have been told that my two bedroom ADA Accessible Accommodation Section 8 Voucher may be in jeopardy that I've had since 2009.

I now may become homeless for filing a civil rights case and standing up for my civil rights. To protect myself, I get a note to document everything and have had to fax my Housing paperwork from Senior and Disability Services instead of sending it in the mail so I have a confirmation of receipt. I'm so scared that someone will exploit a small mistake and I'll be hurt more.

This has a big mental health impact. I feel lots of heartache and stress. It's overwhelming. I live in constant fear and wish that I had the money to have stability and security and not have to live on disability. I don't see any way out except to wake up and survive, and advocate.

I've been retaliated against and abused for standing up for my Civil Rights, but continue to keep standing up for my Civil Rights and that's why SB 1536 is important. It is a way for other people to have more clear rights to be cool if they have health conditions or a disability. SB 1536 will save lives All my struggles have taught me how to speak up for myself, but many people have struggles that prevent them from doing this. Please listen to me and give voice for the many people who can't testify today in support of SB 1536. Vote yes for SB 1536.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my story. Please support SB 1536.

**Jaime Ann Carleton, Civil Rights Activist
Member, Policy Community Alliance of Tenants**