



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

Oregon

February 12, 2024

Senate Committee on Housing & Development
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 1530

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the Senate Housing and Development Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon (ACLU of Oregon). The ACLU of Oregon is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing civil liberties and civil rights, with more than 28,000 supporters statewide. We strongly support Senate Bill 1530, which would provide rent assistance for Oregonians most at risk from eviction.

As an organization with a long history of fighting for civil rights in housing, we strongly support eviction prevention investments. Oregon is among the states with the most cost-burdened renters in the nation. As a result, Oregon has one of the highest rates of homelessness in the nation.

With a sharp spike in high-rent houselessness, it's urgent that you invest in proven prevention strategies that keep Oregonians housed. At current levels of need, the funds previously allocated will be gone by July 2024. **The legislature must fully fund the Stable Homes for Oregon package included in Fair Shot's People's Budget which has had a proven track record of keeping working Oregonians safe and stable.**

Altogether, this package calls for:

\$45 million in rent assistance through community action agencies and community-based organizations.

\$6.5 million to the Urban League of Oregon for culturally specific housing stability services.

\$6 million to the Home Fund at Oregon Worker Relief for housing stability services for immigrant Oregonians.

\$2 million for outreach services for residents of expiring affordable housing units.

86% of eviction filings are for nonpayment, against people who have fallen behind on their rent. There are close to 2000 eviction filings a month. The availability of rent assistance for tenants in the critical time of need will help ensure that landlords get paid, evictions are avoided, and most importantly, Oregonians stay housed.

Hardworking Oregonians are struggling to make ends meet, facing eviction and houselessness as a result. It is ten times less expensive to prevent homelessness than it is to respond to it. The People's Budget investments will keep people housed, while we work towards long-term solutions to end our housing and affordability crisis. **The ACLU of Oregon urges your support for Senate Bill 1530 and asks you to pass it out of committee.**

Respectfully,

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