



19 February 2026

House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Oregon Legislature

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs Breese-Iverson and Andersen, and Members of the Committee:

RE: Senate Bill 1523A - Support

My name is Jimmy Jones, and I am the Executive Director of the Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency (MWVCAA) in Salem. We serve low-income residents of Marion, Polk, and nine other counties across Oregon. Annually, MWVCAA administers more than \$80 million in services and direct assistance supporting housing stability, homelessness response, energy and weatherization, and early learning programs for tens of thousands of Oregonians. Through this work, we see firsthand how unnecessary barriers, particularly administrative and technological barriers, can undermine otherwise effective housing systems.

I am writing to express strong support for Senate Bill 1523A. The stakeholder engagement that led to the Senate amendments is appreciated, and there is now no known opposition to the bill.

As housing systems increasingly rely on digital tools, some residents are left behind. Limited internet access or lack of smartphones can make it difficult to pay rent, apply for housing, or access essential facilities. These challenges reflect systems that do not yet work for everyone. Housing stability depends on accessible and reliable systems. Senate Bill 1523A ensures modernization does not come at the expense of access while maintaining flexibility for housing providers.

Specifically, there are three core provisions in the bill that the Legislature should protect:

- **Keep the option to pay by check or other commercially reasonable method:** Tenants should not be required to pay rent through an electronic portal. Electronic portals are confusing, hard to access on a mobile device, and may fail at critical moments. They may also charge extra fees. And, a typo or simple mistake in a portal could have a serious impact on someone's housing stability.
- **Keep the option of a paper application:** Digital applications can be exceedingly difficult to complete on a mobile device or without consistent internet access. Preserving the option of a paper application is an easy way to ensure everyone has an opportunity to apply for housing.
- **Keep the option of a non-digital key to access essential facilities:** App-based entry systems require an up-to-date smartphone, which not all Oregonians have. Tenants must be able to use a key, keyfob, or keypad to access essential facilities such as laundry, parking, and trash areas. Oregon law already recognizes this principle for entry into a housing unit, and the same protection should apply to other facilities covered by a rental agreement.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your support for Senate Bill 1523A. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your continued service to Oregon communities.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "JJ".

Jimmy Jones
Executive Director