



HOUSING SENIORS | CREATING HOPE | PILOTING CHANGE

February 18, 2025

Representative Pam Marsh, Chair
House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
900 Court St NE, H-283 Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 3521

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

Thank you for the opportunity to share testimony, on behalf of Northwest Pilot Project, in support of HB 3521, which is a common-sense piece of legislation that ensures fairness for renters when landlords choose to collect a hold deposit for a unit. This bill will create transparency and much-needed regulation of hold deposits by:

- Protecting prospective tenants from losing funds when landlords fail to meet their obligation to provide housing that meets habitability standards;
- Establishing clear standards for hold deposit agreements, ensuring tenants and landlords understand their rights and responsibilities;
- Discouraging coercive practices by penalizing bad actors; and
- Encouraging landlords to set lower hold deposit amounts because the financial penalty for wrongful withholding would double.

Northwest Pilot Project (NWPP) is a social service agency with over five decades of experience in providing housing stabilization services to low and very low-income older adults, age 55 and over, experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Multnomah County.

NWPP staff frequently work with clients who are unaware of their rights and responsibilities throughout the housing application process, as well as landlords who do not comply with landlord-tenant law during the screening and approval processes. Our staff have identified that a major area of confusion in the approval process for a unit revolves around hold deposit agreements, with the lack of clear legal protections allowing for predatory practices by some landlords.

The changes to applicant screening law outlined in HB 3521 will create a fairer, more secure process that ensures hold deposits are used ethically and transparently. We encourage your support of HB 3521. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Yoni Kahn
Advocacy Director
Northwest Pilot Project