

February 2, 2026

Subject: Oppose SB 1523 as Drafted

To: Chair Pham, Vice Chair Anderson, and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development,

I am writing to share concerns about SB 1523 and to urge the committee to oppose the bill as currently drafted and consider the modifications presented below.

I understand the bill's intent is to ensure that all applicants have an equal opportunity to housing as it relates to the application process. However, focusing on paper-based applications is not the way to achieve this. In fact, there is a strong likelihood that pushing this as an option could reduce the target population's opportunities due to the delays inherent in paper-based applications.

My property management company – Portland Homes and Commercial Properties, works with a broad spectrum of applicants – including many of whom this bill aims to help. We do, in fact, provide paper applications to those who request them. I can tell you, without exception, that applicants who have to rely on paper applications have fewer opportunities because of the time it takes them to complete and return the application to our office for processing.

Rather than taking a step toward paper applications, your objective is best served by first supporting the use of appropriate technology and relying upon paper applications as an option of last resort.

Electronic applications that are smartphone-friendly: Our society is such that almost everyone – no matter their economic profile - has a smartphone. In addition, most online rental applications are smartphone-friendly. I suggest that this option be presented to applicants before defaulting to paper applications. If smartphone-friendly applications are not an option, there is also the possibility to...

Filling out the online application at the property management office: At Portland Homes, we allow applicants to come to our office to complete online applications. This does not put additional demands upon them, for if they were using hardcopy, they most often come to pick up the paper application and return to deliver it. By allowing them to complete the app online at our office (with our assistance as needed), their applications move to the front of the line for consideration more quickly than if they relied on paper.

Of course, there are absolutely going to be instances when paper is the only option. Any well-intentioned property manager will accommodate that need. However, to require it before consideration of other technology-based options, I respectfully suggest, is not the proper path.

I appreciate your consideration.

Andrew Gilburne

Owner

Portland Homes & Commercial Properties