



MULTIFAMILY NW

The Association Promoting Quality Rental Housing

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

RE: Support for SB 1530 -3

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Gary Fisher

gary@multifamilynw.org

Feb. 13, 2024

Chair Jama, members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in strong support of the -3 amendments to SB 1530, which would raise the total rent assistance resource allocation to \$258 million. As partners in addressing our state's housing emergency, our association stands firmly in support of needed investments in rental assistance for Oregonians navigating housing instability.

Multifamily NW is the largest association of housing providers in the state, with nearly 1,000 members collectively managing more than 275,000 units throughout Oregon and southwest Washington. Our association advocates for common sense public policy with one goal in mind: Keeping Oregonians housed.

A robust and permanent statewide rent assistance program is an efficient way to address housing instability in the short-term, with positive impacts in the long-term. This investment can help residents who are facing financial difficulties to pay their rent on time – thereby reducing the risk of eviction, which benefits both renters and housing providers.

With recent record increases in expenses – utilities, payroll, insurance, maintenance, and other costs – our members uniquely understand the increasing cost of providing housing in Oregon. While these costs grow, the average wages of Oregonians do not. There is an alarming disconnect between the cost of providing housing and our collective ability to cover those costs. Rent assistance is a viable option for both housing providers and renters that are struggling with in this current market.

Due to the financial, social, emotional, and legal cost of eviction for all involved, it is always a last resort for any housing provider. That is why we are also pleased to see a \$40 million allocation for the Oregon Eviction Diversion and Prevention, and Eviction Prevention Rapid Response programs. In our shared pursuit of fewer evictions in Oregon, this investment will be key to not only keeping Oregonians housed but will also put less strain on the public systems that unhoused Oregonians rely on when they lose their housing.

Overall, investing in rent assistance programs can benefit both housing providers and residents by promoting housing stability, reducing vacancy rates, addressing economic inequality, and providing housing providers with assurance that their costs will be covered.

Thank you again for the opportunity to support.

Sincerely,

Gary Fisher
Executive Director

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