



community alliance of tenants

March 16, 2023

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

Re: House Bill 2680

Dear Chair Dexter and Members of the Committee:

The Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT) urges you to support HB 2680, the regulation of tenants' screening fees charged by the landlord. Tenant screening is a central part of the rental process but should not be a burden for tenants, particularly those struggling to make ends meet.

As a tenants' rights organization, every day, CAT works with tenants to ensure they are aware of their rights and have access to resources that can assist them in resolving complex issues. Tenant screening fees can add up quickly. If an applicant is denied multiple times, making it difficult for individuals, particularly low-income renters, to find secure housing.

Regulating tenant screening fees can help protect renters from unfair practices and unreasonable fees. HB 2680 ensures that the tenants are informed of their right to a refund if they are denied housing; this can help prevent landlords from keeping the fees without providing any service.

Additionally, requiring landlords to provide documentation to tenants will increase transparency in the rental application process. Tenants can see exactly what information is used in their application and how their application fee is used. This will prevent discriminatory practices or biases of prospective tenants.

Furthermore, many tenants rely on their screening fees to cover the cost of other application fees, deposits, and moving expenses. The 14-day deadline ensures tenants can access the funds they need to secure a new rental unit.

Overall, CAT believes HB 2680 is necessary to protect tenants' rights and ensure that the rental process for tenants and landlords is fair and transparent. We strongly encourage you to pass HB 2680.

Sincerely,

Alexis Ames
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Community Alliance of Tenants
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