Consumer Federation of America

—

1620 I Street NW
Suite 200
Washington, DC
20006

—

202-387-6121
info@consumerfed.org
ConsumerFed.org

Consumer Federation of America

March 19, 2025

CFA's Strong Support of SB 722

The Consumer Federation of America (CFA) is an association of non-profit consumer organizations established in 1968 to advance consumer interest through research, advocacy, and education.

CFA urges speedy passage of SB722, which would prohibit landlords from using an algorithm fueled by non-public rental data to keep rental prices and terms artificially unfair.

Algorithms increasingly mediate critical determinations for Oregonians – housing eligibility, hiring decisions, credit rate determinations, what content they're shown, and more. This is often done with no transparency or choice for consumers, and to the detriment of their bank accounts.

In the past several years, as reporting and lawsuits by the Department of Justice and Attorney General Rosenblum illustrate, major property management companies and landlords conspired to keep rent prices and terms artificially high by sharing non-public data with the same third party companies – leading to unfair terms for many Oregonians.

Despite using an algorithm, it's simple – management companies sign up with the same third party that aggregates non-public data about their occupants, then get fed recommended rates above the market.

Jurisdictions have already mobilized to prohibit these actions – similar measures were passed in Philadelphia and San Francisco last fall, and have been introduced in Maryland, California, Colorado, New Jersey, New York, and Virginia this term.

This bill is simple, well-tailored, and will address this illegal and immoral behavior while allowing for rental prices to reflect a competitive market. Oregon has the chance to be a leader in helping cut costs, fight for consumers, and simply prohibit clearly anticompetitive behavior regardless of what technology is used to do it. By passing SB722, you can do exactly that.

Ben Winters
Director of AI & Privacy
bwinters@consumerfed.org