

Chair Keny-Guyer and members of the Committee:

I'm Trell Anderson, from Catholic Charities/Caritas Housing and I live in Portland. I am writing to ask for your support for basic tenant protections that will increase housing stability for Oregon's renter families.

At Catholic Charities, we have decades of providing important and life-saving services to people in our community who are of low-income and low wage earners, including families with young children, survivors of domestic violence, seniors citizens, people with disabilities, people from war torn and famine stricken regions around the world with formal refugee status, and homeless women from the harsh streets of Portland.

We provide our services in both English and Spanish and have developed significant capacity to serve the Latino community in a culturally-specific manner through El Programa Hispano Catolico. Over the past two years, our Case Workers have become housing placement and retention specialists. In every program, our Case Workers report that housing access and housing stability is the number one issue they deal with when trying to advance clients along a continuum of stability.

We also develop, own and operate affordable housing – through Caritas Housing (Caritas being the Latin word for “Love”). We are a landlord with 16 properties in Portland, Beaverton, Hillsboro, Molalla, Sandy, Canby, and Sutherlin, in Douglas County. By this time next year we will have acquired 3 additional properties in Glendale and Rogue River. We provide housing to nearly 1,600 vulnerable people.

We are a member of the Oregon Opportunity Network. Oregon ON is a statewide organization with 50 members and over 100 affiliate members. Member organizations are nonprofit affordable housing organizations providing housing opportunities across the state. Together we own and operate some 20,000 units of affordable housing in large and small communities, both urban and rural. You could think of us as a statewide landlord association.

As an association we are strongly supportive of House Bill 4001 and the fair and reasonable tenant protections components. As landlords, we understand the nuanced and tactical approach to managing rental housing, particularly with rules and regulations that govern our relationship with our tenants. As landlords, our association strongly supports House Bill 4001 and/or HB 4143. These are workable tenant protections.

Good tenants should not fear suddenly losing their homes or facing large rent increases, both of which can have devastating consequences, including homelessness. Tenants should have at least 90 days' notice for no-cause evictions and rent increases, and be protected from retaliation.

We must act now to help renters maintain housing stability and to increase the number of affordable units. I hope that you will support these measures. Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

Trell Anderson