

SB 259 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services

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Meeting Dates: 3/20

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Limits landlord to charging a single applicant screening charge for applicants applying to rent multiple dwelling units owned or managed by landlord. Requires landlord to refund screening charge if applicant qualifies but is not offered to rent dwelling unit.

FISCAL: May Have Fiscal Impact, But No Statement Yet Issued

REVENUE: May Have Revenue Impact, But No Statement Yet Issued

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon law allows landlords to charge an application screening charge to potential tenants applying to rent a property. Applicant screening charges are required to be no more than the average actual cost of screening an applicant, such as costs related to checking credit histories, background checks, and reasonable time spent on the application. Landlords are required to refund screening charges if they fill the rental unit applied for by the applicant before starting the screening. Landlords also must refund screening charges if they do not screen the applicant for any reason.

Senate Bill 259 limits a landlord to only charging one applicant screening charge for applicants applying to rent multiple units that are managed or owned by the landlord. The measure requires a landlord to refund a screening charge if the applicant is screened and otherwise qualifies for the rental, but is not offered an opportunity to rent. It also clarifies that an applicant cannot recover an applicant screening charge if the applicant refuses the landlord's offer to rent the dwelling unit.