

HB 2724 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Human Services and Housing

Action Date: 03/30/17

Action: Do pass and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference

Vote: 9-0-0-0

Yeas: 9 - Gorsek, Keny-Guyer, Meek, Nearman, Noble, Olson, Piluso, Sanchez, Stark

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: Has minimal revenue impact

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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) to develop and implement the Rent Guarantee Program (Program). Directs Program to provide tenants from low-income households training on achieving successful tenancy and certification of training and provide incentives and financial assistance for unpaid rent, eviction and property damages to landlords renting or leasing to low-income households with certain limitations. Requires landlords to collect metrics including length of tenancy, reason for termination, amount of unpaid rent, and damages and provide a report to OHCS before receiving financial assistance. Authorizes OHCS to contract with eligible public or private providers to administer Program and distribute funds throughout the state. Establishes Rent Guarantee Program Fund within the State Treasury and appropriates money to OHCS for administration of the Program.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Overview of Rent Well program in Oregon
- Rent Well curriculum for participants
- Outcomes of Rent Well program

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Rent Well is a tenant education course taught by certified instructors on how to be a successful renter. This course is taught throughout the Portland metro area to tenants. Topics covered in the course include understanding landlord expectations, budgeting, effective communication with landlords and neighbors, maintaining a rental unit, and successful move-in and move-out procedures. Participants in the Rent Well course include individuals who have poor or no credit, past evictions, no rental history, or criminal history and are low-income, at risk of homelessness or currently homeless. When a participant has completed the Rent Well course, they receive a certificate to present to landlords when applying for rental housing. Landlords accepting Rent Well tenants can register for the Rent Well Landlord Guarantee Fund, which may cover damages, unpaid rent, or eviction costs.

House Bill 2724 directs Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) to develop and implement the Rent Guarantee Program (Program) to provide tenants from low-income households training on achieving successful tenancy and certification of training. The Program would also provide incentives and financial assistance for unpaid rent, eviction and property damages to landlords renting or leasing to low-income households with certain limitations. Landlords participating in the Program are required to collect metrics including length of tenancy, reason for termination, amount of unpaid rent, and damages and provide a report to OHCS before receiving financial assistance. The measure authorizes OHCS to contract with eligible public or private providers to administer Program and distribute funds throughout the state.

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House Bill 2724 also establishes the Rent Guarantee Program Fund within the State Treasury and appropriates money to OHCS for administration of the Program.