



community alliance of tenants

Dear Chair Fahey, Vice-Chair Campos, Vice-Chair Morgan and member of the Housing Committee,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT) in support of HB 2163 regarding a study for the establishment of a long-term rent assistance program. CAT formed in 1996. CAT is Oregon's only statewide, grassroots, tenant-controlled, tenant-rights organization. CAT educates, organizes and develops the leadership of low-income tenants. We believe that housing is the basis of a strong community. So, we bring tenants together to organize and collectively advocate for fair and equal protections in housing practices and policies.

The *Housing Crisis*, made much worse by the public health crisis of COVID-19, requires public intervention in the form of rent assistance. The study should do more than determine the cost and mechanics of distribution, it must also address the lack of dignity in our current rent assistance systems that stems from the systemic harms of race-based housing discrimination and classism. We need a long-term rent assistance program universally accessible that will keep households and communities stable, funded at a level to address the economics of the housing crisis and equitably distributed so as to remove barriers for Black, Indigenous and other Communities of Color that are most often denied access to these public benefits. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kim McCarty
Executive Director
Community Alliance of Tenants