

SB 278 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Carrier: Sen. Jama

Action Date: 03/16/21
Action: Do pass.
Vote: 4-0-1-0
Yeas: 4 - Anderson, Golden, Jama, Patterson
Exc: 1 - Linthicum
Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued
Revenue: No revenue impact
Prepared By: Devin Edwards, LPRO Analyst
Meeting Dates: 2/9, 3/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Alters limits on Rent Guarantee Program Fund payments from maximum of \$5,000 per landlord to maximum of \$5,000 per eligible tenant.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Barriers to housing
- Program costs
- Program access and language services across the state
- Program eligibility for individuals with mental health issues
- Tenant education curriculum content

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon Housing and Community Services Department (OHCS) administers the Rent Guarantee Program (Program) to provide financial assistance to landlords who lease or rent to low-income tenants who have successfully completed required training. Landlords who evict tenants for noncompliance or have a tenant vacate within the first 12 months of tenancy may apply to receive payments to cover losses from unpaid rent, eviction, and property damage. OHCS disburses funds to Program providers who deliver tenant readiness education to individuals whose total annual household income is less than 60 percent of area's median income based on household size, who are experiencing housing barriers and instability such as poor credit or criminal history; and landlords must sign a Program agreement with a participating provider to access assistance. Program funds are currently available on a per-landlord basis, up to \$2,000 for unpaid rent and up to \$5,000 in total financial assistance.

Senate Bill 278 makes financial assistance available on a per-tenant basis, rather than a per-landlord basis, to allow a maximum of \$5,000 per eligible tenant.