

Chair Fahey, and members of the committee:

For the record, my name is Kevin Cronin, director of member relations and industry support for Housing Oregon.

Housing Oregon is a membership-based statewide association of affordable housing community development corporations (CDCs) committed to serving and supporting low-income Oregonians across the housing needs spectrum – from homeless to homeowner.

Housing Oregon is in support of HB 4125, which proposes narrow changes to the current law that increases consumer protections for renters and clarifies language surrounding the application process for landlords. This measure requires landlords to notify tenants of these consumer protections, helping to create an equitable playing field for this type of business transaction.

Oregon has a tight rental market with a historically low vacancy rate. Units between 80% to 120% Fair Market Rent often receive 20 to 30 applications in the first twelve hours of an opening. Renters are most vulnerable to homelessness during a time of transition from one unit to another. Application fees can range up to \$75 per adult and represent a substantial barrier for someone exiting homelessness. Refunding an application in a timely manner, if not selected, will be a huge boon to renters who are conducting their housing search with limited resources.

I've spoken with resident services specialists and a group of housing navigators in the Eugene area. Returning the screening fee is not a common occurrence in the current market, and this continually comes up as a major barrier to low income renters and voucher holders.

Thank you to Rep Nathanson for sponsoring this bill and we urge the committee to support it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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