

Testimony on SB 434

As an eviction specialist, I spend a lot of time mediating issues with clients and their residents. So, why would I be opposed to this bill? I'm largely not opposed; however, parts of this bill are written in a very concerning way. For example, the bill gives the mediator the power to declare that one party or the other is not operating in "good faith" with the mediation process and gives them the power to have a case dismissed or have a judgment entered against the renter.

That's unfair to both parties and gives way too much power to the mediator. Both parties have the right of due process, and this bill appears to be trying to take that right away.

The history of mediation in Oregon is that it is a voluntary process. Forcing it to be mandatory in all cases is not reasonable. Also, as a person who operates in many courts around the state I can tell you that even in courts where mediation is offered, there are NEVER enough people to perform the mediation services.

I would be happy to reconsider my opposition to the bill if those parts were removed or rewritten.

Thanks for your time!

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