



House EMGGV Committee
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

February 7th, 2024

Chair Grayber, Vice-Chairs Tran and Lewis, and members of the committee,

SETA is a non-profit, public service organization dedicated to renters' rights and interests. We provide free community resources, including our free Tenant Hotline, and we directly serve about 250 renter households every month through combinations of several programs.

We write to you today to urge your support of HB 4155, the infrastructure study bill. On its surface it may seem strange that a tenant non-profit is asking you to fund an agency study of infrastructure needs and costs, but we believe that infrastructure (and lacks thereof) contribute to the current astronomical housing costs. These costs result in renter immobility, which is at the very core of why SETA exists. Right now, because of lack of housing availability, far too many **renters in Oregon are being forced to put up with inhumane and dangerous living conditions** for the simple reason that they have no other housing in their area they can afford.

Roughly 80% of the tenants we serve fall at or near the federal poverty line. Looking at the calls waiting in our hotline queue on literally any day of the week you will see things like black mold infestations in bedrooms and unresponsive landlords, windows and exterior doorknobs broken for days on end, completely disabled hot water heaters, and more. The renters in these living situations frequently turn to use for help navigating their situations while avoiding any risk of eviction, knowing that is a quick path to homelessness. **Making housing more affordable by finding ways to bring down infrastructure costs will result in more housing security for the people we serve.**

Members of the committee, we urge your support of HB 4155.

If you'd like to connect with me, please reach out to tmorris@springfieldeugenetenantassociation.com. I would be happy to discuss this further. Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim", is positioned above a horizontal line.

Timothy Morris
Executive Director
Springfield Eugene Tenant Association