

Dear Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Anderson and Breese-Iverson, and Committee Members,

I am writing in opposition to HB 2305, the three-strikes bill, before the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness.

As a director of a non-profit that runs a free, voluntary, and confidential mediation service between tenants and landlords (property managers as well). Our program serves everyone, but we work with a huge portion of the vulnerable population - BIPOC, LGBTQ, Seniors, Disabled, Low-Income, Single Parents, Vets and more with mental or behavioral health issues.

My experience working with these populations in Oregon gives me concern that this bill will undoubtedly impact tenants experiencing financial hardship. These groups are already pressured or disregarded by landlords and property managers during these times, and establishing stable housing is a challenge for these groups.

HB2305 will make it easier for landlords and property managers to evict tenants for minor infractions. Although this is not the specific goal of the Bill's proponents, its overly broad nature will make it easy for bad actors to abuse it. This also gives too much power to an already unbalanced situation, where the landlord/property manager can hide their biases or prejudice behind this bill.

Navigating resources has not only been difficult for tenants, but myself as a program manager that does a lot of networking and partnering. Tenants who don't have access or computer skills, have already used an agency for rental assistance, not sure where to go, or aren't able to increase or find more income, will have more barriers not only to avoid eviction but get into another home and possibly leading to more homelessness. These situations have escalated so quickly with miscommunication or lack of empathy to where it took more than 30 days to resolve the conflict. I also do not agree with the 30 day no right to cure, it's another way for someone in power to be dismissive of someone's circumstances or retaliate without consequences. The repeated violations or serious safety violations already have options in the law for landlords, so I do not believe we need to overlap or increase the chances of having a human discretion to file for evictions. I also believe this could back the courts up even further if you looked at the number of mediations that happen because there is a right to cure or creating payment plans and mediating all types of situations between both parties.

I sincerely urge you to protect Oregon's most vulnerable tenants by voting against HB 2305. You can aid those of us on the front lines of Oregon's housing crisis by focusing efforts on legislation that will make housing more available and more equitable for these groups.

Thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony and for your service to our communities.

Sincerely,