

Submitter: Kevin Bixby

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1523

I am a case manager who works to house 55+ seniors mainly in Multnomah County. Most of them are very low income and/or disabled. Often, they neither have the financial means nor competency to have and operate electronic devices for website activity.

I have had clients who missed housing application deadlines because they could not maneuver through an online application correctly before deadline. Often, bugs in the online application process exasperates the problem.

I have had clients receive late fines for failing to submit their rent payment online before deadline. These are good tenants with the means and will to pay, and had no problem paying their rent by check or money order in times past. But they are not allowed to pay that way now. And so they are penalized for the property management's desire for their own convenience of online payment.

I believe an inability to pay online can and should be treated as a disability which property managers must make reasonable accommodations for. Paper applications and checks or money orders should be a viable and welcome option.

Thank you,
Kevin P. Bixby,
Housing Case Manager for NW Pilot Project