



HOUSING SENIORS | CREATING HOPE | PILOTING CHANGE

Oregon State Legislature

House Committee on Housing and Homelessness

*Re: Support for SB1523A*

Dear Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs Breese-Iverson and Andersen, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Yoni Kahn, and I am the Advocacy Director for Northwest Pilot Project (NWPP). Northwest Pilot Project is a housing services provider, dedicated to serving low-income seniors in Multnomah County. We have been in operation for 56 years. We are well organized, financially sound and have proudly taken on the responsibility of serving individuals with long-term housing plans intended to keep them in their apartments for the duration of their lives. We offer our clients rent assistance, case management services, housing retention services and permanent supportive housing.

Our agency works specifically with older-adults over the age of 55, with a growing proportion of our clients being over age 65 (42% in 2024). Vulnerable seniors who lack access to technology, smart phones, e-mail accounts and computers often come to us for assistance because they encounter challenges submitting applications for housing via online rental housing portals. This bill addresses the challenges many seniors in Oregon face in a balanced, collaborative and thoughtful manner by allowing for printable or paper applications, payment options outside of a tenant portal and allowing for non-digital key access to common areas. Regarding the paper application provision, please note that it is not expected that this change will result in a significant number of people submitting paper applications, but the option will be of great value to those who need it. If it turns out that we have this wrong, we are committed to opening the discussion back up.

NWPP is an agency that prides itself on working collaboratively with both the clients we work with and the market-rate and affordable housing providers that house the individuals we serve. As an entity that does not own or manage housing, we cultivate productive partnerships with housing providers in order to ensure that our clients can remain situated in stable housing for the duration of their lives. Without our housing provider partners, we would not be able to be as effective and efficient at our work.

We are extremely grateful for the partnership with all those stakeholders involved to identify a good solution to a solvable problem. SB1523A has been amended to include provisions that contain small tweaks to preserve options for tenants without causing

problems for landlords. It is our hope that this bill provides a balanced and thoughtful solution to bridging the digital divide. We are supportive of SB1523A and encourage you to pass it. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Yoni Kahn  
Advocacy Director  
Northwest Pilot Project