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**RE: Support for SB 838**

Chait Jama, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development,

Portland Tenants United is in strong support of SB 838, which would create a real property registry in Oregon. PTU would further advocate to amend SB 838 so it can better serve as a resource for tenants across the state.

Portland Tenants United builds power and solidarity among the tenant class throughout the Portland metro region as a member-driven tenant union. Through organizing, direct action, coalition building, and civic engagement, Portland Tenants United fights to keep people in their homes, and to achieve dignity and security for all Portlanders who rent their homes.

SB 838 could support tenants in a number of crucial ways. The most prominent support would be in enforcing rules that apply only to landlords that own a certain number of properties. A key example is found in ORS 90.427 (6). This section stipulates that if a landlord evicts a tenant for a landlord qualifying reason, the tenant is entitled to relocation assistance worth one month's periodic rent. However it also states that the relocation assistance requirement only applies to landlords with an ownership interest in more than four dwelling units. The problem is, there is no way for a tenant to determine if their landlord is exempt. As Senator Taylor testified, a tenant may not even know who their landlord is. Even if they know, they have no way of verifying how many units that landlord owns. Suggesting that a tenant dig through the systems of all county assessors' offices in the state of Oregon to find out is completely unrealistic. And if the landlord owns multiple LLCs that are each responsible for one or two units, learning this information would require research far outside the scope of a tenant, and even of a tenant advocacy organization like ours. A statewide registry would make the project much more manageable.

SB 838 would also be a powerful tool for policy makers. When the City of Portland instituted a citywide relocation ordinance, there was also an exemption for landlords that owned four units or fewer. PTU was deeply involved in the discussion around the bill and can testify that four dwelling units was an arbitrary number. Portland City Council adopted this measure without having any idea of its impact. A PTU organizer, who is a professional data analyst and researcher, spent dozens of hours doing research to show that this exemption left 25% of Portland renters unprotected, a finding that led the City of Portland to remove the exemption. That research process was able to use a single database, maintained by the City of Portland. If the state of Oregon creates provisions that are dependent on the number of units held by a

landlord, it needs to know what the implications are, information that would be readily available with this registry.

PTU would strongly support including more information in the registry, such as rental amounts, and provisions that ensure the data is readily accessible to the public.

SB 838 is a low-cost, common sense measure that would provide vital information for tenants, tenant advocates, and policy makers. Best of all, it has no negative consequences. There are no reasons for landlords to feel concerned about this information, since this information is already publicly available. The bill would simply make it easier to access.

PTU urges your support.

Sincerely,

Portland Tenant United Organizing Committee