



February 25th, 2021

Chair Fahey, Vice Chairs Campos and Morgan, and members of the Housing Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2372 with the -1 amendment. The Springfield-Eugene Tenant Association is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to supporting and advocating for renters. We operate the only free and general-purpose Tenant Hotline in our region, which has enabled us to glean data and information that we hope is useful to policy makers like you.

No-cause evictions continue to be one of the largest challenges Oregonians are facing in our turbulent housing crisis and during the global pandemic. The data collected by SETA's Tenant Hotline paints a stark picture - in the month of January 2021 alone, out of 84 total calls, 11 related to no-cause evictions. Even in spite of the ongoing eviction moratoria, these evictions continue to happen with alarming frequency and often push vulnerable persons into untenable circumstances, including homelessness. As you know, landlords have a multitude of other avenues available to evict tenants for cause. Given those other methods for landlords to enforce their property rights, **we believe that no-cause evictions are unjust and perpetuate greater harm than good to our communities and we humbly ask that you pass HB 2372 with the -1 to right this wrong.**

Furthermore, we are excited to see that HB 2372 (with the -1 amendment) clarifies the penalties for fraudulent eviction notices. Fraudulent evictions have been a rampant problem in the Eugene/Springfield area and the law, as it stands now, has proven insufficient to compel many landlords' compliance with the tenant protections passed by this body. Examining all calls made to SETA's Tenant Hotline since we began reporting data in March of 2020, evictions have been the most frequent call topic in nine of the past eleven months (often by margins as wide as double the next-most frequent call topic). In a shocking number of cases, tenants were able to contact SETA prior to their purported eviction date and the information we provided resulted in their eviction being cancelled and in them remaining housed. The regularity of this problem seems to indicate a lack of sufficient deterrent for landlords to engage in this illegal practice. **Even separate from the other provisions of HB 2372 ending no-cause evictions, SETA believes this effort to clarify penalties for fraudulent eviction notices is an extremely worthwhile effort to address a clear and prevalent issue.**

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide testimony on these critical issues and for your efforts to create a better Oregon. If the Springfield-Eugene Tenant Association can be at all useful to you, please do not hesitate to reach out.

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