



February 1, 2022

To Chair Fahey, Vice-Chair Morgan and Campos, Members of the Committee:

My name is Caitlyn Kennedy Young, and I oversee the tenant education program, Rent Well, which is owned by Transition Projects. I am asking for your support of House Bill 4125-1. HB4125-1 would make changes to the laws related to tenant screening. With Oregon's housing crisis, the COVID pandemic, and the devastation caused by the wildfires, we need innovative and diverse solutions to increase rental opportunities for individuals in need of housing.

As I said before, I oversee the Rent Well tenant education program. This program teaches tenants about their rights and responsibilities as renters. All too often, by the time an individual can get into a Rent Well class, it is after they have submitted many applications only to receive denial after denial. Some of these individuals are nearly in tears when they tell us about how many times they've been denied housing and how few barriers to housing they actually have. It is hard to hear no and it is even harder to pay to hear no over and over again. Many of our students are shocked to find out about their rights around either being informed if their background has been run or getting their application fee returned. I, personally, have worked with participants before who waited upwards of three months to get their application fee back or be informed about if they were screened at all. I am working with individuals that are homeless and don't have the luxury of waiting three months to hear a no.

The changes proposed in HB4125-1 would clarify the timeframe for when a tenant would hear back with results, provide education and information for tenants around their rights, and increase the plenty fees for non-compliance. These are all much-needed reforms that would positively impact potential tenants immensely.

Your support is paramount to passing HB4125-1 to ensure that we can continue supporting Oregon tenants to improve their housing situations. Thank you so much for your time and consideration on this matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caitlyn Kennedy Young".

Caitlyn Kennedy Young | Senior Manager of Landlord-Tenant Services