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February 9, 2023

House Committee on Housing & Homelessness
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 3125

Good morning Chair Dexter, members of the committee,

My name is Alli Sayre and I'm the elected organizing coordinator for Portland Tenants United, the Portland city-wide 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 tenants. I'm writing today to testify in support of HB 3125, which would establish a water and sewer bill payment assistance fund for low income residents of Oregon.

Under current Oregon law, the penalty for missing a rent payment is higher than a utility payment. So for tenants who are struggling to pay their bills, utilities are some of the first they cannot afford to pay. Being that running water is an essential service in any residence, it is devastating for tenants when their water is shut off. This bill would create a program to act as a lifeline to those tenants, allowing them to stay securely and safely housed. Please move this bill forward with a do pass recommendation.

Sincerely,

Alli Sayre
Portland Tenants United Organizing Committee