



March 12, 2023

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

On behalf of the Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT), we strongly support SB 817 the proposed bill that expands eligibility for pre-plea probation and diversion for low-level crimes and works towards charge dismissals through counseling and or community service.

As a tenant's rights and housing advocacy organization, we see firsthand the devastating impact that involvement with the criminal justice system can have on individuals and communities, particularly those already marginalized and vulnerable.

Many tenants we work with face significant barriers to securing stable housing due to criminal records, even for minor offenses. This can lead to homelessness, housing instability, and a cycle of poverty that is difficult to break. Expanding eligibility for pre-plea probation and diversion programs will help prevent unnecessary involvement with the criminal justice system and reduce the number of people with criminal records that can limit their future opportunities.

In addition, these programs can provide much-needed support and resources to individuals struggling with addiction, mental health issues, or other challenges that may have contributed to their involvement in the criminal justice system. By offering alternatives to incarceration and preventative measures, we can help individuals address the root cause of their behavior and reduce the likelihood of future involvement with the criminal justice system.

This proposed bill is an essential step towards creating a more just and equitable criminal justice system that prioritizes rehabilitation and support over punishment and incarceration. We urge you to support this bill and take meaningful action to address the systematic injustice that has led to the over-criminalization of marginalized communities in Oregon.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

The Community Alliance of tenants.



**community**  
alliance of  
**tenants**