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On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2967

My name is dyvisha, and I am submitting this testimony to express my strong support for eliminating rental screening fees. These fees are an unnecessary financial barrier to housing, disproportionately impacting renters with low incomes. At a time when the cost of living continues to rise, placing this financial burden on renters instead of owners and leasing companies is not just unfair—it's cruel. It only deepens the challenges people face in securing stable housing. Maybe it's time to acknowledge that this feudalistic approach is outdated and no longer works.

In Oregon's competitive rental market, prospective renters often have to apply for multiple units before securing housing. With screening fees ranging from \$30 to over \$60 per application, the financial burden quickly becomes unsustainable. A renter applying for five or six units could spend hundreds of dollars in nonrefundable fees without any guarantee of securing a lease. These costs take money away from essential needs like food, rent, and utilities, further increasing the risk of housing instability.

Meanwhile, the city of Eugene recognized how excessive these fees are and capped them at \$10. If Eugene can do it, why are renters in other parts of the state still being charged exorbitant fees just to apply for housing?

Eliminating rental screening fees also benefits landlords and property managers. Many already use third-party screening services that allow applicants to reuse reports, making it unnecessary to charge tenants multiple times for the same background check. Removing screening fees expands the applicant pool, helping landlords fill vacancies more quickly and reducing the administrative burden of collecting and processing fees. More than that, it encourages more qualified renters to apply—people who might have skipped applying due to the upfront cost. That means fewer vacant units, faster tenant placement, and more long-term, stable renters.

Housing is a basic necessity, and no one should have to pay excessive fees just for the chance to secure it. Eliminating these fees is not just about fairness—it's common sense. The current system disproportionately harms those already facing financial hardship, and it is time for Oregon to take meaningful steps toward a more equitable housing process.

I urge the committee to support the elimination of rental screening fees and remove this unnecessary barrier to stable housing.

Thank you for your time and consideration.