

Submitter: Lea Belton
On Behalf Of: myself and my fellow renters
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2967

Dear members of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness,

I am a co-chair of a local Housing Work Group. We launched the Renters' Bill of Rights issue campaign. HB 2967 is directly related to #5 of the RBoR. I am so grateful that representative Gamba, Gorsek and Chaichi have sponsored a bill to prohibit rental application fees.

Application fees (and other fees like pet rent, late fees, laundry costs and other arbitrary charges) are used predatorily by landlords to exploit renters of their hard earned money. Housing is a need and us renters are exploited by so called housing providers that need us to pay their mortgages.

I am a renter. Renters should be the authority on the costs that affect us, not landlords because of the imbalance of power that exists in that relationship.

I have experienced landlords not knowing the law about application fees. Several landlords have expected to be able to keep the money I paid for an application fee even though my application was denied. So not only are fees of this sort a financial burden when landlords don't know their rights AND responsibilities, these fees become a justice & education burden as well. A justice and education burden that falls on the people with less power in the landlord-tenant relationship.

Fees of this sort exacerbate housing insecurity, limit access to affordable housing and cause renters to have to educate those who already have immense power over them.

Current Oregon law is not helping renters.

I urge you to put renter needs above landlord wants.

I urge you to support HB 2967 and use your power to support the Renters' Bill of Rights.

<https://pdxrenterpower.com/>

In love of democracy and in financial urgency,
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