

Submitter: Sophia Powers

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2305

Dear Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Anderson and Breese-Iverson, and Committee Members,

I am writing in opposition to HB 2305, the three-strikes bill, before the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness.

I personally work with several families in Washington County who are at risk of homelessness. I also have previous experience working for a rental property. It is incredibly common for individuals' pay checks to come in on the 5th of the month. This is frequently one day late, as many properties' due dates is on the 4th. Oftentimes, whether or not the late fee can be removed is up to the property manager's discernment. I've seen firsthand how this may result in tenants being treated unfairly by the same property manager. Given the cost of living and housing currently, most families cannot afford a surprise late fee (or several) that snowball into following months. This bill would have an incredibly harmful impact on Washington County residents who are living at or below the poverty line, who have extenuating circumstances such as disability, or who are part of already marginalized groups. This bill would see more families lose their housing, which is not something the majority of residents can afford or successfully recover from.

My experience working with vulnerable communities in Oregon gives me concern that this bill will unduly impact disabled tenants, tenants from marginalized communities, and tenants experiencing financial hardship. These groups are already over-policed by landlords, and establishing stable housing is a challenge for these groups.

This bill will make it easier for landlords to evict tenants for minor infractions. Although this is not the specific goal of the Bill's proponents, its overly broad nature will make it easy for bad actors to abuse it.

I sincerely urge you to protect Oregon's most vulnerable tenants by voting against HB 2305. You can aid those of us on the front lines of Oregon's housing crisis by focusing efforts on legislation that will make housing more available and more equitable for these groups.

Thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony and for your service to our communities.

Sincerely,  
Sophia Powers