



Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to SB 54 and the -1 amendments. For background, Oregon REALTORS® is an industry association comprised of roughly 18,000 members who work as real estate brokers, real estate principal brokers, real estate property managers, and affiliated industry professionals. In turn our members represent hundreds of thousands of Oregonians in their real property transactions.

SB 54-1 would require landlords of a multiunit structures with 10 or more dwelling units—and after January 1, 2036, all landlords—to provide cooling for every bedroom in their building when the temperature outside exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit. If the room cannot be cooled to 80 degrees, the unit could be considered uninhabitable. While we recognize the health risks of extreme heat, we believe SB 54-1 goes too far. It adds significant costs that will be passed on to renters in the form of higher rents. It is also not possible to meet the 80 degree requirement in every instance when outdoor temperatures exceed 100 degrees.

Oregon law already requires housing providers to allow tenants to use or portable air conditioning units as a result of Senate Bill 1536 (2022). We believe that a better approach than SB 54 to ensure that tenants have access to cooling while maintaining housing affordability would be to build off SB 1536 and provide more funding for programs that provide AC units to Oregonians who need them and financial incentives to housing providers that make cooling upgrades.

Central air conditioning systems are expensive to install. While portable air conditioning units are a less expensive alternative, having to purchase one for every bedroom the landlord owns would come at a high cost as well. These costs will then result in higher rents and reduced housing affordability. Heat pumps, while potentially more affordable than central air or portable units, are not as efficient at cooling a space as other cooling systems and are generally capable of cooling a room to only 20 degrees below outside temperatures. In instances where the temperature exceeds 100 degrees, they may be incapable of keeping a room at a maximum of 80 degrees.

Passive cooling design would only be feasible for newly constructed buildings, as a critical component of passive cooling is to orient the structure in a certain direction relative to the angle of the sun to minimize the amount of light that shines into the unit, thus reducing the amount of heat transferred into the unit. And while passive cooling may be sufficient to



limit indoor temperatures to 80 degrees in some cases, it may not be sufficient in periods of extreme heat.

Oregon REALTORS® is sensitive to this issue and the need to provide cooling resources for Oregonians, but SB 54-1 goes too far. Let's work together to identify solutions that address the problem while maintaining housing affordability, such as increasing funding for programs that provide air conditioners to Oregonians who need them and financial incentives for housing providers and developers that make cooling upgrades.

We urge the committee to vote NO on SB 54-1.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our testimony.