



Re: Support for SB 722 / Opposition to Dash 1 Amendments

Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Alexis Ames, and I serve as the Community Engagement Coordinator for the Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT), Oregon's only statewide, tenant-led renters' rights organization. I submit this testimony on behalf of CAT and the thousands of renters we support through our hotline, workshops, and direct advocacy.

We strongly urge you to **support SB 722** and to **oppose the Dash 1 Amendments**, which would strip out the bill's most important protections for tenants—specifically, the reduction of the new construction exemption from 15 years to 7 years. Removing this provision would significantly weaken the bill and deny vital protections to renters living in tens of thousands of newer housing units across Oregon.

Every day, our organization hears from renters facing impossible choices—between paying rent or putting food on the table, between staying in their homes or being forced into homelessness due to sudden, unaffordable rent hikes. Since 2023, our Renter's Rights Hotline has received calls from tenants reporting rent increases of 30%, 40%, or even higher. These are real people—families, seniors on fixed incomes, and working-class Oregonians who cannot afford to wait 15 years for protection.

SB 722 is the only policy tool this session that provides immediate, measurable relief by:

- **Reducing the new construction exemption from 15 to 7 years** strikes a fair balance between encouraging new development and ensuring those units do not contribute to long-term gentrification and displacement.
- **Banning the use of rent-inflating, price-fixing AI software**, which has commodified housing and harmed tenants by manipulating rental pricing to maximize profits.

The **Dash 1 Amendments** would gut the heart of SB 722. By preserving the 15-year exemption, these amendments would allow corporate landlords to continue imposing unlimited rent hikes on renters in new buildings for over a decade—prolonging displacement, financial instability, and housing insecurity.

We cannot continue to prioritize speculative market forces over the stability and dignity of Oregon renters. The eviction crisis is accelerating, with more than 27,000 cases filed last year, 88% due to unaffordable rent. Our communities cannot wait.

We urge the committee to reject Dash 1 and advance **SB 722 in its original form**. Oregon renters need real protections now—not watered-down compromises.

Thank you for your time and commitment to housing justice.

Sincerely,

Alexis Ames

Community Engagement Coordinator

Community Alliance of Tenants