



MULTIFAMILY NW
The Association Promoting Quality Rental Housing

Oregon Senate Committee on Housing and Development
900 Court St. NE
Salem Oregon 97301

May, 12, 2025

RE: Concerns with HB 3521 A

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

On behalf of Multifamily NW, thank you for the opportunity to provide our perspective and concerns regarding HB 3521 A. We are the largest association of housing providers in the state, representing nearly 300,000 units and every profession related to the industry.

The habitability requirements in ORS 90.320 are basic, longstanding industry norms and violations are highly irregular in best practices of rental property turnovers that are consistently met between tenancies.

Hold deposits with signed agreements are common in rental housing transactions. They are utilized often as a courtesy to approved applicants in order to stretch their move-in date, allowing the approved applicant more time to sign the rental agreement and move-in to the property. For example, the apartment will be ready for move-in on the 15th of the month, but the approved applicant would prefer to move in the next month on the 1st.

Typically, the hold deposit amount is a fraction of the total amount that is owed to begin the tenancy at move-in when the Rental Agreement is signed. If the approved applicant chooses not to honor the hold deposit agreement, that hold deposit is forfeited to compensate the housing provider for taking the unit off the market and reserving it for the approved applicant. It's rare, but if somehow the housing provider cannot deliver the unit on the agreed upon date, and another date can't be negotiated, the housing provider is already required to timely refund the hold deposit back to the approved applicant.

HB 3521 A will upend this process and allow the approved applicant to not honor the hold deposit agreement by citing their opinion of a habitability concern. Will it be worth the time, risk and resources for housing providers to explain this habitability misconception with the passage of this bill? No, I worry it will not.

Instead of taking on the financial risk of holding rental units to begin the tenancy at the convenience of the soon to be tenant, HB 3521 will simply necessitate greater rigidity to the move-in date. This bill negatively affects for more renters than the very few it intends to protect.

We urge you to oppose HB 3521 A to avoid reducing housing options and increasing costs. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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