

June 3, 2025

Representative Ben Bowman
House Majority Leader
Chair, House Committee on Rules
900 Court St NE, H-295
Salem, OR 97301
RE: Support for House Bill 3974

Dear Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Drazen and Pham, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Travis Mauzy and I'm a renter living in NE Portland. I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 3974, "Relating to residential applicant screening charges." This bill represents a crucial step towards fostering a more equitable and accessible housing market for all Oregonians, addressing a persistent and often invisible barrier that disproportionately impacts our most vulnerable residents.

In my experience I've often applied to over 5 places each time when looking to move. As we all know Portland's housing market is highly competitive and with that comes many applications. Each application can run \$50 and often, as an applicant, you never hear back. I've then spent hundreds of dollars before I've even gotten a place to live. It's highly stressful and unnecessary. A system in which tenant screening is a cost of doing business for landlords, rather than being outsourced to prospective tenants, is already in place in other states such as Vermont and Massachusetts. HB 3974 caps this expense and complexity for both tenants and landlords. In any other industry, consumers are generally not charged by businesses for the privilege of applying to become their customers.

There is an understandable need for landlords to properly vet prospective tenants to ensure the safety of their properties and other residents. However, the \$20 cap is not an arbitrary figure. It suggests a shared responsibility. Landlords can absorb minor administrative costs as part of doing business, or they can pursue more efficient, bulk screening services. The true cost of many digital background and credit checks is often lower than the current fees charged.

House Bill 3974 is more than just a bill about fees; it is about fairness, dignity, and ensuring that the door to safe and stable housing is not shut to those who need it most due to arbitrary financial barriers. By supporting this legislation, you send a clear message that Oregon is committed to removing unnecessary obstacles to housing and building a more inclusive and resilient state for everyone.

I urge you to vote in favor of HB 3974 and empower more Oregonians to find their place to call home. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Travis Mauzy