



February 4, 2025

Re: Support for HB 4123

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Melissa Erlbaum, and I am the Executive Director of Clackamas Women's Services. I am here in support of HB 4123.

The Clackamas Women's Services (CWS) Housing Program serves over 400 households a year.

Every day, we work with survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and trafficking who are trying to rebuild their lives. Safe, stable housing is often the single most important factor in whether a survivor can successfully leave abuse and remain safe. For survivors, housing stability and confidentiality are directly connected.

We have worked with survivors who carefully rebuild safety after leaving abuse, including changing routines, securing new housing, and starting new employment. In one recent incident, a survivor's workplace was disclosed by a landlord, resulting in the abusive partner appearing at the survivor's workplace. Situations like this are rarely the result of malicious intent; they are often due to unclear confidentiality standards.

When applying for and securing housing, landlords have access to private information that, if disclosed without consent, can place survivors at risk of further abuse and re-traumatization.

For many survivors, disclosure of their victim status — particularly by a landlord or housing provider — can expose them to retaliation, harassment, or coercion, and can undermine safety planning and long-term housing stability.

Currently, Oregon law does not provide clear confidentiality protections for this information when it is collected by landlords or property managers.

HB 4123 addresses this gap by establishing clear limits on when confidential tenant information may be disclosed and requiring tenant consent, except in specific legal or operational circumstances.

We also appreciate that the bill maintains practical exemptions that allow landlords and affordable housing providers to meet compliance, screening, and funding requirements. This balance is essential to implementation and ensures the bill supports both tenant safety and the effective functioning of the housing system.

In another situation, a landlord shared information with a neighboring tenant about a tenant's recent experience with domestic violence. That information was later repeated back to the survivor by the neighbor. The survivor immediately felt unsafe, withdrew from community connections in the building, and ultimately moved out of stable housing earlier than planned. A disclosure may not be malicious in order to create real safety and housing stability impacts.

For survivors, confidentiality is directly tied to whether they can maintain housing, employment, and community stability after leaving violence. When survivors trust that their information is protected, they are more likely to engage with housing providers, disclose information necessary for eligibility, and remain stably housed.

HB 4123 provides a clear, workable standard that supports both tenant safety and housing provider clarity. It reduces risk, increases consistency, and strengthens trust in the housing system.

HB 4123 is a practical step that strengthens survivor safety, protects tenant privacy, and provides clear guidance for housing providers. For survivors of domestic and sexual violence, stalking, and trafficking, these protections can mean the difference between continued danger and the chance to build a safe, stable future.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge your support of HB 4123.

Thank you for your time, your leadership, and your commitment to safe and stable housing for all Oregonians.

Sincerely,



Melissa Erlbaum
Executive Director
Clackamas Women's Services