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# Oregon Democrats Vote to Protect Tenants from Unfair Rental Practices

*House Bill 2680 strengthens existing law to make sure a prospective renter has their application fees returned when landlords do not process background checks during screenings*

**SALEM, Ore.** - This week, House Democrats voted to protect prospective renters from unfair rental practices by requiring landlords to return application fees when they fail to process background checks during screenings. [House Bill 2680](#) increases transparency and clarifies current law that says landlords should return fees in these instances. Oregonians looking for housing can spend upwards of \$200 on application fees.

“This will help people who are hard pressed to come up with deposits and multiple fees,” **said [Representative Nancy Nathanson \(D-Eugene\)](#), chief sponsor of the bill.** “People should be treated fairly, and this makes sure we can remove barriers that will make Oregonians’ lives a lot easier.”

“This is a reasonable solution that will put money back in renters’ pockets at a time when they really need it,” **said [Representative Jules Walters \(D-West Linn/Tualatin\)](#), sponsor of the bill.** “We must make finding housing more affordable and efficient for Oregonians.”

The bill has four components that will increase transparency and protect tenants:

- **Notice of Rights:** This would require the landlord to notify the applicant when they charge an application fee, under what circumstances and when it should be returned.
- **Screening Confirmation:** Landlords would need to provide confirmation of receipt to the applicant once the background check has been run.
- **Fee Return Time Period:** This would make sure landlords return the application fee within 30 days, or for up to 60 days if the application is being considered for other units.

- **Accountability for Landlords:** If an application fee that should be returned is not, this would increase the penalty from \$150 to \$250.

House Bill 2680 passed 38-20 and now heads to the Senate for consideration.

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