

HB 3016: Manufactured Home Parks. Coalition bill including Conflict of interest

Oregon has more than 1,100 manufactured home parks, located in 57 of our 60 districts, providing more than 63,000 residential spaces for affordable housing.

Nearly every legislative session since 1997 has had a bill negotiated by the Manufactured Housing Landlord/Tenant Coalition, and this is another in that long history of collaboration. This bill represents over 30 hours of negotiations over the past year to reach a consensus.

There are several aspects to this bill. It already passed through The House Committee on Revenue for a housekeeping correction to the capital gains exemption for landlords who sell their manufactured housing parks to their residents. It also has several technical “fixes” to the 2014 bill that set rules for residents who come together to make an offer to purchase their park.

And it contains four substantive changes that are the result of the negotiations addressing the housing aspect.

The first preserves and increases the capacity of the Manufactured Communities Resource Center. The MCRC, a program of the Oregon Housing and Community Services Department, is a critical resource for both landlords and tenants to promote cooperative relationships.

Another change allows landlords to have back taxes cancelled on abandoned manufactured homes in certain situations.ⁱ

The third amends the habitability requirement for manufactured home parks to include the provision of natural gas or propane, if available, and the maintenance of the surface or ground under the manufactured home.

The fourth change, and a significant part of this bill, is a successfully negotiated set of regulations to address conflicts of interestⁱⁱ when a tenant chooses to sell their home, and the relationship between the park owner or representative, the home owner, and prospective buyers or renters. Last fall a constituent contacted my office with concerns about sale practices being used by park management. I visited the park to learn what was happening.

The bottom line is this: the home owners, who are tenants in the park, and the park owner, should be competing equally in the marketplace for buyers, and the tenants should be confident that they have a fair chance.

I am pleased with the hard work over the past months, and that the coalition has once again come together to develop solutions.

ⁱ This allows the landlord some financial relief that will help them sell the home in an arms-length transaction, preserving badly needed affordable housing from being destroyed.

ⁱⁱ The park owner/landlord or representative may engage in practices similar to that of a realtor but without a license, lacking standards for truthful representation of properties and prices, and steering potential buyers away from a park tenant’s home and toward a home owned by the landlord.