



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

April 10, 2023

Timothy G. Sekerak
Chief Clerk of the House
State Capitol Building
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Vote Explanation – HB 3443 A-Engrossed

Chief Clerk Sekerak,

I stand before you today in opposition to HB 3443. This bill seeks to protect tenants who are victims of a bias crime by relieving them of any damages resulting from the crime and allowing them to stay in their rental agreement without fear of eviction. On the surface, this may sound like a good idea; however, this bill is misguided and threatens to create more problems than it solves.

Rather than helping victims of bias crimes, HB 3443 will actually put them in danger by creating a disincentive for landlords to intervene or take action if they suspect a tenant is being the victim of such a crime. In addition, this bill would give tenants an incentive not to report any potential bias crimes occurring on their premises out of fear that they will be financially responsible for damages or evicted due to the incident.

Moreover, HB 3443 would also place an undue financial burden on landlords who often operate within slim margins and can ill afford such losses. As an unintended consequence, landlords may pass these costs onto other tenants in the form of higher rent prices or discourage new tenants from entering into leases altogether— resulting in disruption of our housing market. This bill would place an unnecessary financial burden on landlords who, in many cases, operate within very tight budgets. The damage resulting from the commission of a bias crime can be



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incredibly expensive; this bill would require landlords to absorb these costs with no additional compensation.

Moreover, this bill does not address the root causes of such crimes; instead, it penalizes landlords for something that is out of their control. Rather than creating legislation that shifts the burden of responsibility away from perpetrators onto property owners, we should be looking for ways to prevent bias crimes from occurring in the first place.

Finally, I worry that this bill might have an unintended consequence of scaring tenants away from reporting potential bias crimes out of fear they will be financially responsible or evicted due to the incident. We need to ensure that tenants feel safe and secure in their homes—not create incentives for them to stay quiet about any possible discriminatory behavior.

In conclusion, HB 3443 is misguided and would do more harm than good by causing financial hardship for landlords and disincentivizing tenants from reporting potential bias crimes.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bobby Levy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Representative Bobby Levy, HD 58