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Housing stability will help foster youth get on their feet

SB 278: Extends Rent Guarantee Program to foster youth 16 to 27 years old

SALEM – The Oregon Senate voted to give foster youth an additional tool to help make themselves self-supporting as they transition into adulthood.

[Senate Bill 278](#) – which passed the Senate floor on a 26-0 vote today – extends eligibility to the Oregon Housing and Community Services Rent Guarantee Program to individuals between the ages of 16 and 27 who were wards of the juvenile court within the past 10 years.

“In short, this bill simply adds foster youth to the population who can access a program that makes rental housing available to those who may otherwise have a very hard time finding a landlord who would approve their application,” said Sen. Kathleen Taylor (D-Milwaukie), who carried the bill on the Senate floor. “It’s a small change with the potential for meaningful impact.”

The program provides comprehensive tenant education to get individuals prepared to be successful as renters, as well as incentives for landlords who rent to program participants. It guarantees payments to landlords for unpaid rent in the case of eviction, as well as property damage costs, within the first 12 months of the rental or lease agreement. It’s designed for people who:

- May be homeless, experiencing housing instability or are at risk of homelessness;
- Have poor credit history;
- Have criminal history; or

- Have past evictions.

Senate Bill 278 now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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