



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Trio of Oregon Senate Bills Lower Hurdles to Safe, Affordable Housing

Oregon Democrats advocate for tenants and homeowners with passage of three key bills

SALEM, OR – Three separate bills passed in the Oregon Senate this week improve options and affordability for renters and homeowners. The measures address safety and accessibility for all.

Senate Bill 1523, passed Tuesday, helps maintain housing access in the digital age. The measure preserves low-cost options for rental applications, rent payments, and property access, saying landlords cannot require tenants to use an online portal or mobile app for these purposes.

“As more aspects of renting move online, we must ensure that technological change does not lock people out of housing,” said **Senator Khanh Pham (D - SE & NE Portland)**, chair of the Senate Housing and Development Committee. “This bill has budget-neutral solutions to help keep people in stable housing.”

The legislation requires landlords to allow payment by check or other commercially reasonable method; paper or printable rental applications; and physical keys, magnetic fobs, or keypad access for common areas. The measure passed in a vote of 22 to 7.

Another Senate bill promotes building accessible housing that meets the needs of people with disabilities and older adults. Championed by **Senator Deb Patterson (D – Salem)**, Senate Bill 1576 requires that new Oregon apartment buildings developed with Low Income Housing Tax Credit funding meet accessibility standards of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973. That law calls for buildings to have wheelchair-accessible entrances and hallways and for a percentage of units to have reinforced wall for grabs bars, knee space under counters, and other accessibility features. Senate Bill 1576 passed the Senate 27 to 1.

“The need for more accessible housing is only growing as our populations ages. There are now more people in Oregon over 65 than under 18. If we are to address Oregon’s housing crisis, we must look to the future and build the types of housing that are most needed,” **Senator Patterson** said.

Oregonians also need protection from the devastating threat of wildfire, but homeowner associations (HOAs) and planned-community covenant documents sometimes impose rules on fences and exteriors that can leave families vulnerable to a blaze.

That changes under Senate Bill 1551, backed by **Senator Sara Gelser Blouin (D - Corvallis, Albany & S. Salem)**. The measure, passed in the Oregon Senate today in a vote of 28 to 2, voids community rules that prevent people from using fire-hardened materials on and around their homes.

“Senate Bill 1551 is a common-sense solution that cuts through the red tape so that Oregonians can protect their homes and their families in the upcoming fire season and beyond,” said **Senator Gelser Blouin**.

All three measures for safe and affordable homes now move to the Oregon House of Representatives. The current short legislative session must end by March 8 according to the Oregon constitution.

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