

March 29, 2019

Mayor Ted Wheeler  
Commissioner Chloe Eudaly  
Commissioner Nick Fish  
Commissioner Amanda Fritz  
Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty  
City of Portland  
1221 SW 4th Avenue  
Portland, OR 97204

Re: Proposed Tenant Screening Criteria Policy (draft 2/20/19)

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners:

As nonprofit housing providers, we are committed to making housing affordable and accessible to those who need it the most. Especially in times like these with a housing and homelessness crisis pushing our neighbors out of their homes and communities and making poverty that much harder to manage and overcome. We know that our elected officials in the City of Portland are also deeply committed to addressing the housing needs in our communities.

The tenant screening reform, led by Commissioner Eudaly, is an attempt to make it possible for people to access more housing in the wider market as well as among us nonprofit providers. Our communities are safer and healthier when all our neighbors are housed, including community members who have had involvement with the criminal justice system or past struggles with housing stability. We have all spent months reviewing the tenant screening criteria proposal through this lens.

Housing Oregon members appreciate Commissioner Eudaly for considering our input and making changes to the policy that constructively address most of the concerns expressed by our members. To support the Council in its deliberations, some individual Housing Oregon members may offer the Council more specific perspectives on the proposal, its potential impact, and modifications to consider based on their experiences serving the community. Thank you in advance for considering the perspectives of Housing Oregon members that choose to engage.

We commend Commissioner Eudaly for promoting a more equitable vision for Portland's rental market and stand ready to collaborate on future policy making

discussions as well as implementation of the screening and security deposit ordinance. We believe through early and active engagement of all key stakeholders, we can improve upon past efforts and produce more sound public policy. Given the detailed operational requirements involved, we encourage the Council to deliberate on the resources and directives that will be necessary to effectively communicate and train owners and managers on this new policy.

Thank you,

Bridge Housing, Cynthia Parker, President and CEO

Catholic Charities of Oregon, Travis Phillips, Director of Community Development & Housing

Central City Concern, Mercedes Elizalde, Public Policy Director

Hacienda CDC, Ernesto Fonseca, Executive Director

Housing Development Center, Joni Hartman, Executive Director

Human Solutions, Andy Miller, Executive Director

REACH CDC, Dan Valliere, CEO

ROSE Community Development, Nick Sauvie, Executive Director

Transition Projects, George Devendorf, Executive Director