

ORHA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Jim Straub, ORHA Legislative Director

On April 9, 2015, I testified at the Oregon Legislature on House Bill 3076, which would require annual well water testing by landlords and require us to report the data to the Oregon Health Authority, which would analyze ground water contaminant data and provide education in problem areas. The ORHA opposes this bill because it places an unreasonable financial burden on landlords to analyze their groundwater, and also because the bill was not routed through the Landlord-Tenant Coalition for consideration as part of the coalition's landlord-tenant omnibus bill. Landlord and tenant advocates have mutually agreed to we would oppose any landlord tenant bills that have not gone through the Landlord Tenant Coalition.

Here is an excerpt of my testimony:

Historically, since the early 1980's, bills relating to landlord-tenant matters have been negotiated by the Coalition, which is comprised of tenant advocates, landlord advocates, both representing all areas of the state, legal aid and other attorneys, housing authority representatives and other interested parties.

In every single legislative session except one since the beginning of this group, the stakeholders have sat down together to vet issues from both sides and explore all the variables and impacts associated with any affected parties to ensure that there are no unintended or unforeseen consequences. There are so many variables at work in any proposed legislation that even the best intentioned legislators cannot always measure the full impact on such a large and diverse group of stakeholders. The Landlord-Tenant Coalition is a perfect example of bipartisanship and cooperation and, as such, the laws affecting landlords and tenants are truly some of the most fair and balanced in the nation. We should continue to honor this model.

In this bill, the cost of doing business for landlords will increase, which will equate to higher rent prices for tenants. Generally, bills which increase costs across the board are not always popular with either affected party. I urge you to vote against the passage of this bill at this time and recommend to the sponsor to place this bill into the able hands of the Landlord-Tenant Coalition for further discussion.

The Landlord Tenant Coalition's own bill, Senate Bill 390, is still under consideration by the Oregon Legislature, but we don't anticipate any opposition to its passage. Stay tuned to future legislative updates for more information on bills currently under consideration.