

## **2013 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:**

By Jim Straub, Legislative Director

Since our last newsletter's Legislative Update, I'm pleased to announce that Senate Bill 91A, the Landlord Tenant Coalition "Omnibus" Bill, passed the Oregon Senate on April 22<sup>nd</sup> on a 27 to 1 vote. This bill continues to move forward, with its first hearing in the Oregon House in the Human Services and Housing Committee on May 6<sup>th</sup> and a committee work session scheduled for May 13<sup>th</sup>.

House Bill 2639, the Section 8 "Housing Choice" Bill, is currently scheduled for a public hearing on May 14<sup>th</sup> in the Ways and Means Committee. I will testify at that public hearing on ORHA's behalf and continue to make our case that, should the bill pass, the landlord mitigation fund should be available to us at no less than \$10,000 per claim and should funding for the Housing Choice program go away, the program must be closed too. There are no changes to report in the bill since our last Legislative Update, but our work with Speaker Kotek to positively influence the outcome of this bill continues.

We want to bring your attention to a new bill – Senate Bill 610A – that pertains to a topic of frequent interest to landlords, assistance animals. This bill was introduced to address concerns about assistance animals in places of public accommodation, such as grocery stores. We understand it was negotiated by a group of business interests and disability advocates. The purposes of the bill include conforming state law with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), defining assistance animals and public accommodation, and repealing out-of-date Oregon statutes which confuse ADA coverage with Fair Housing Act coverage. This bill cross-references ORS 90.390 (a portion of landlord tenant law dealing with assistance animals) but because the bill deals almost exclusively with public accommodations (which does not include rental housing), it should make no real change in the way landlords currently handle assistance animal/reasonable accommodation requests for the rentals.

Don't forget that the State of Oregon's official webpage also has a wealth of information on the Legislature's website. Just log-on to [www.oregon.gov](http://www.oregon.gov) and click on the "Legislature" link. You can follow the progress of these bills in real time on that website.