

## **The First Landlord-Tenant Coalition Meeting of the 2013 Legislative Session**

The Oregon Landlord Tenant Coalition group met Thursday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, in anticipation of the Oregon Legislature's 2013 Session, which begins January 14<sup>th</sup>. The Landlord Tenant Coalition is made up of stakeholders representing landlords and tenants who hammer out proposed landlord-tenant law to be placed before the Oregon Legislature for approval. Typically, each side presents its priorities and compromises so that all parties receive some benefit from the proposed legislation. In attendance at the first meeting were representatives of Lane County Legal Aid, Community Alliance of Tenants, Rental Housing Association of Greater Portland, City of Corvallis, Oregon Rental Housing Association, Legal Aid Services of Oregon, Oregon Law Center, Metro Multifamily Housing Association, and a few private parties.

In this first meeting, proposals made by landlord representatives (including ORHA) include amending the statute of limitations to allow for up to five years to pursue collections against tenants (increased from the current one year), amending the statute to allow landlords to collect actual collection costs if a debt is turned over to a collection agency (costs in addition to the original debt amount), disallowing utility companies' ability to pursue landlords for tenants' past due/unpaid utility bills, allowing non-compliance fees for sneaking in pets, requiring renters insurance, among others. We learned that the tenant priorities this year include amending the domestic violence protections to include the disabled and the elderly, clarifying who qualifies as a guest and whether they can be trespassed from the rental property, clarifying landlord-tenant law surrounding foreclosures, clarifying whether only one of several tenants can be evicted (in situations other than domestic violence, where it's already allowed), and the removal of evictions from the public record if they are dismissed by the court. This is just a sampling of the many, many items that may be addressed at the coalition level. If you don't see your concern listed here, it doesn't mean it won't be discussed. The coalition is currently scheduling meetings through December 2012.

As our coalition meetings continue and the Legislature convenes, you'll find more information here. In the meantime, the State of Oregon's official webpage has a wealth of information on their Legislature's website. Just log-on to [www.oregon.gov](http://www.oregon.gov) and click on the "Legislature" link. From there, the link "Contact information and answers to frequently asked questions" is especially informative. On both pages, you'll find facts about the makeup of the Legislature, a calendar of events, a district map, how to find and/or write your legislator, and even a kids' page.