



May 11, 2011

Oregon Department of Justice
1162 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301-4096

Bureau of Labor and Industries
800 NE Oregon St., Suite 1045
Portland 97232

Attorney General John Kroger and Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian:

We are writing to urge you to begin aggressively enforcing Oregon's Fair Housing Laws.

It was with serious alarm and repulsion that we read an *Oregonian* article outlining a pattern of discrimination against African American and Latino renters in the Portland housing market. The May 10th article uncovers discrimination against renters in 64 percent of test cases conducted in Portland.

This is not an isolated incident, the mere ignorance of one intolerant individual, but rather is evidence of a deeply rooted infection of prejudice that continues to run under the surface of our culture. It is a sobering reminder that the scourge of racism was not defeated with the civil rights movement of the 1960s. We must continue to be alert to its presence and meet its ugly symptoms with intention and ferocity.

The city of Portland has chosen a more passive approach to this insidious problem, opting for a campaign of "education and cooperation" in the face of blatant law breaking. In our opinion, the violation of an Oregonian's civil rights and the laws of our state demands action that is aggressive and forceful. There is a serious need to model an assertive approach towards the problem.

Oregon has a strong set of laws prohibiting housing discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, and other classes of people. We, the Senate Republican Caucus, are asking that you prioritize enforcement of these statutes, citing, and where appropriate, prosecuting individuals who violate the civil rights of another.

We would be happy to assist you with this effort, and look forward to hearing of your progress.

Sincerely,

Senator Jason Atkinson

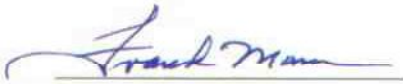
Senator Brian Boquist

Senator Ted Ferrioli


Senator Larry George

Senator Fred Girod

Senator Jeff Kruse




Senator Frank Morse



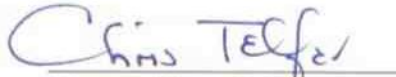
Senator David Nelson



Senator Alan Olsen



Senator Bruce Starr



Senator Chris Telfer



Senator Chuck Thomsen



Senator Doug Whitsett



Senator Jackie Winters