



**SB0171 - Office of Home Energy Programs – Financial Assistance**

**Matt Losak, Executive Director**

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Hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee Committee,  
January 30, 2024

**Position: FAVORABLE**

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Founded in 2010, the Renters Alliance is the first and only regional nonprofit dedicated exclusively to renter outreach, education, organizing and advocacy.

We thank Senator Augustine and Delegate Charkoudian for their leadership on this issue.

SB171 protects renters from any landlord who would use this loophole to decline utility payments from a third party. There is no reason for a landlord to make a renter's home unstable unless they are intentionally targeting tenants receiving public assistance. We have successfully passed the Home Act to ensure that no renter is discriminated against based on source of income. The same should be true when receiving utility assistance from any third-party source including the state.

We know when tenants do not have this protection, some landlords might use the declination of payment as a means to target and evict low-income, and disproportionately tenants of color. SB 171 removes this vulnerability.

We urge a favorable report

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