

**Testimony at House Human Service and Housing Info
Hearing**
February 1, 2016

Chair Keny-Guyer, members of the Committee, Deborah Imse with Multifamily NW. Our members range from folks with one or two rental homes to members with 18,000 units.

There is no question that many communities across Oregon are experiencing very low vacancies and high rental demand, causing real challenges for some renters looking for available units at their price range. Even with thousands of new units built and thousands more in the pipeline, multifamily housing is not keeping up with current demand.

Unfortunately, both HB 4001, and HB 4143, **make it harder to ensure the wellbeing of *all* renters.** As you have heard from some already, the ability to use an end-of-tenancy notice is a rarely used—but key—tool to keep residents and staff safe. Extending the notice length to 90 days makes it harder to ensure everyone’s safety when they are at risk.

HB 4001 also **makes some renters pay for the costs of others by adding new requirements and restrictions.**

- The bill prohibits rent increases during first *year* of a month-to-month rental. That doesn’t mean taxes, utilities, fees and costs don’t increase, they just get

pushed onto other renters. And a renter could continually rotate in new tenants to re-set the year timeframe, insuring that their rent could never be increased.

- It requires a landlord to pay one month's rent for tenant relocation when a rental agreement is ended without eviction, creating a new operating cost. It's also unfair that a payment would be required *even* when a property manager ends a rental agreement to protect the health or safety of other renters or staff.
- HB 4001 assumes there has been retaliation if there is a rent increase notice within six months of a tenant complaint. It's hard to prove a negative, and again this would increase costs for other renters.

We have committed to good-faith comprehensive discussions for 2017 through the Landlord Tenant Coalition on retaliation, end-of-tenancy notices, evictions and other complex rental agreement issues. This broad group of stakeholders has brought collaborative, quality housing policy revisions to landlord tenant law for more than two decades.

Partially lifting the preemption on Rent Control will increase costs and won't produce anywhere near the number of affordable units we need. Part of San Francisco's rent control policy requires **12%** of new units be affordable, and the result has been notoriously high rents

and just 1,764 new units of affordable housing *since 1992*. Portland saw more than 2,200 new rental units privately developed in just two downtown areas during *half the time*, without those regulations. HB 4001 permits up to **30%** of new units to be rent controlled.

We oppose^{HB} 4001 + HB 4143

For the 2016 short session, we support simple funding approaches to increase the amount of housing and preserve existing affordable housing.

Multifamily NW looks forward to working with you on the critical issue of housing affordability in 2016 and beyond.

I'm happy to answer any questions.