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Chair Keny-Guyer and Members of the Committee,

My name is Beverly Logan and I am a Portland leader with Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good (MACG), a broad-based organization of faith, labor, health, and community non-profits. We are neither a housing nor an advocacy organization. We organize members around the key pressures they identify. Last year, lack of affordable housing emerged as the top issue—on an unprecedented scale.

We need tenant protections and I urge you to vote in favor of this bill. This is the story we heard last fall from Francia, a resident of Portland, who could not miss work to testify herself.

“My husband and I arrived in North Portland twelve years ago with the hope of finding a new home and stability. We made a life here. We had three children, now aged 11, 12, and 17 years old. They’ve grown up here. They attend schools in the Piedmont neighborhood where we lived.

This year, our apartment building was sold without warning; they came to our home and told us that we could no longer live there. They didn’t think about how this would affect us, whether we had a place to go, the emotional and physical damage that this would cause to my family. They didn’t offer us enough time to find a place. They just evicted us. It felt so unfair.

During our housing search, we met bad people who hurt our morale with negative, racist, comments. The stress was terrible. The effects of the stress caused one child to be hospitalized. We spent all day, every day, searching without resting and without finding a place to live. We spent sleepless nights thinking, “What are we going to do? What will our future be like?”

We called the company that bought the apartment building to ask them to give us just two more days, just one more day. The company said “no”. They said that if we didn’t move out, the sheriff would come to force us out.

We have family nearby, so we moved in with them. This allows my children to continue in the same schools for now, where they are very attached. This is critical to their education and well-being. But it is eleven of us in a three bedroom house. It is crowded and stressful for everyone. It’s scary because we could all be evicted from that house for breaking the rules with so many people there.”

We can survive on my husband's income, but we weren't able to save enough to store the furniture that it took us twelve years of sacrifice to purchase. We had no alternative: we gave away all of our furniture. We gave up nearly everything. We've lost everything.

Her story could have been different if the tenant protections in the bill before you had been in place. Those protections don't provide housing to meet the vast need, but they at least allow tenants a modest space of time to reconfigure their lives and adapt to the traumatic upheavals the market imposes. It provides mere hope that some thin thread of stability can be maintained in the social fabric of countless families upended in this growing housing crisis. Please don't destroy even that hope by failing to pass this bill.