



March 2, 2017

Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer, Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Human Services and Housing  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Chair Keny-Guyer and Representatives,

At first glance, the relationship between housing and children's advocacy may seem tenuous. When most people think of children's issues, they think of education or health care needs. However, research shows that the economic status of the family is one the best predictors of brain development of children.<sup>1</sup> The difference is much more profound among children in the poorest rungs of society. Housing is one of the most basic measures of socio-economic need.

For working mothers, one might assume that losing a job often causes an eviction, but according to research it is more often the opposite – an eviction causes the loss of a job.<sup>2</sup> These evictions affect women with their children more than other group. Evicted mothers are more than twice as likely to report that their children to be in poor health compared to mothers who have not experienced eviction.<sup>3</sup>

Oregon's child poverty level is 22% and the fact that 43% of children live in rentals makes tenant security a children's issue.

Children's advocates agree, which is why allowing local jurisdictions to consider rent stabilization measures and stopping no cause evictions are included in the 2017 United for Kids Children's Agenda. Passing HB 2004 will help children across Oregon enjoy the simple benefit of knowing where they will sleep tonight. We urge you to join us and many others and support HB 2004.

Thank you for your work on behalf of Oregon's kids.

Sincerely,

Tonia Hunt  
Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/poverty-disturbs-children-s-brain-development-and-academic-performance/>

<sup>2</sup> Matthew Desmond and Carl Gershenson, "Housing and Employment Insecurity among the Working Poor," *Social Problems*, 2016, 63, 46–67

<http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/mdesmond/files/desmondgershenson.socprob.2016.pdf?m=1454020332>

<sup>3</sup> Matthew Desmond and Rachel Tolbert Kimbro "Eviction's Fallout: Housing, Hardship, and Health," *Soc Forces* (2015) 94 (1): 295-324, <https://academic.oup.com/sf/article-abstract/94/1/295/1754025/Eviction-s-Fallout-Housing-Hardship-and-Health?sid=3d968290-ac12-49dd-a27f-9dd91e2f2c94>