

Terry Turner – President, Oregon Rental Housing Association
Without Cause Notice Testimony HB 2004 3/2/17

Chair Keny-Guyer and members of the committee. Good morning and thank you for hearing my testimony today. My name is Terry Turner. I am the President of the Oregon Rental Housing Association. ORHA represents thousands of rental owners and managers. We provide tens of thousands of homes for Oregonians. Our members have been portrayed as heartless and greedy people who are uncaring about our communities. This is far from the truth.

Let's be clear – no one invests in rental property so that they can make the property vacant. Over 90% of us depend on the rent to pay the bills.

We use No Cause Notices to protect other tenants, and to allow an unhappy or non-compliant tenant to move without causing negative rental history. I would like to give you a couple of examples that would be dramatically different if this bill were passed.

I'll call the first couple Carol and Ramon. I've known them for more than 10 years. I've rented an apartment, a townhouse and a duplex to them. They always paid their rent on time and their home was always in excellent condition.

When Ramon was deported about five years ago, Carol was left with three children and no family able to help her. I gave her a month's free rent and a list of agencies that might be able to help. I wanted to be able to keep this great tenant, and my heart went out to her and her children.

She couldn't find anyone to help her. So, together she and I contacted an agency that said that if she was just "asked" to leave – a No Cause Notice – they could help her. If No Cause Notices are prohibited in Oregon, Carol and women like her and their children will be forced into shelters and onto the streets. I know this is not your goal.

Another example is a young Latino couple who lived in a duplex and were being harassed by their neighbor. He was taunting them and they were terrified. I had no proof of what the neighbor was doing other than their begging me to help them. I gave him a No Cause Notice to protect them from retaliation.

A No Cause Notice to terminate a tenancy MUST be just that – simply a request for the tenant to move.

HB 2004 goes too far. It will make our lack of housing worse; it will not address the real issues facing tenants. We need more housing and we need it now.