

My name is De'Jahn Bell and my partner Laura and I live in Netarts, OR.

For me, a good home has been priority and problem number one. I have dealt with continuous housing issues which have only gotten worse and harder to navigate as I get older. Home to me is security, reliability, and opportunity. To not have a good home or to have one taken away unexpectedly can be, and is devastating. For Laura and I, our home is a workplace, which makes the situation even more troublesome.

We are self-motivated and self-employed artists, who have moved from one state with severe housing issues to another. We moved because of problems finding affordable and secure housing and because of opportunities offered here with family and Oregon's appreciation of art and small business respect and support. In Oregon, while looking constantly in all directions, we realized there was a serious housing issue here as well. There were little to no options with affordability and price inflation and with availability in general. We moved to Netarts because of all that has been mentioned, we fell in love with the area, community, it's sunsets, and beautiful bay.

Lack of repairs and housing options is a common problem in our small community. Like us, our neighbors want to stay, but with all of us dealing with the same housing issues, the community is being diminished and turned into vacation and seasonal homes for the wealthy. By educating ourselves with Oregon law, we found that our home was not fulfilling its duties and obligations. We reported leaks, pests, and structural issues repeatedly to our property managers and the owner refused to fix or invest in any of the property. While out of town visiting family for Christmas and going to two funerals, a no cause termination notice was posted on our door. It stated that we had what was now less than 30 days to evacuate. This by itself is a horrible thing to find, let alone with a lack of a full 30 days to utilize, and being in retaliation to our demands of a safe and secure home that was up to code. We had to get legal advice, which was very stressful.

Trying to protect yourself, your loved ones, your assets, your life, and it's future is most people's priority. We as a nation, I feel, are dealing with a state of emergency in most of the country. With lack of affordable living wages, the obvious housing market crisis and issues, and our constant growth of population, the situation has only been exasperated. This no cause termination is only troublesome and disastrous to people's lives and their future opportunities. Relocation and moving is costly, and not always an option, just as in our current situation, where there are waiting lists on apartments, no storage units available, and it is an extremely bad time of year to be moving in general, as we all know it's wet and cold. Homelessness is a real possibility and these situations only help perpetuate the cycles of such happening. This creates a destructive atmosphere for almost any individual, which can cause or intensify sickness, mental illness, and problems with wealth and stability. I believe Oregon can and should lead as an example on this issue.

I request to the committee to please support HB 2004 to provide fairness and stability for the millions of Oregonians who are renters.

Thank you.

De'Jahn Bell

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