

My name is Laura Cuccia-Nilsen, my partner and I live in the small coastal community of Netarts, in Tillamook county. It's a community surrounded by the natural beauty of the Oregon coast with a small local population and many visitors through the spring and summer.

We began renting our home in Netarts around this time last year and were welcomed by our neighbors. We quickly made new friends and bonded with the tight knit community, all sharing in the secret that the tourists only got to glimpse, that we have found paradise on earth in this magical place. Netarts has a relaxed atmosphere to it, where a sunset and a walk down the beach can melt away the day's worries and remind us of the many gifts that we have in this world.

Over the last year we learned that the property we were renting was in a state of disrepair and that the managers of the property had little to no support to address the concerns of the tenants. Lack of weatherproofing became apparent as the temperatures dropped and the rains increased. We bundled ourselves and put out buckets and fans to try to keep dry. We started looking for alternate housing and found that many of our neighbors were doing the same and finding options to be few to none. We also studied the Oregon Tenant Landlord Law and found that the law requires the landlord to keep the place habitable. We asked for repairs and in response we were served a 30-day no cause termination notice. In the middle of one of the coldest months of the year we were faced with the threat of losing our home.

Stricken with anxiety and fear, we were consumed with studying our Oregon law resources and increasing our preparations for the possibility of defending our rights in court. We have spent countless hours documenting our claims, writing letters, and speaking with paralegals and an attorney in order to feel some security that we will be prepared and protected under the law. The uncertainty of knowing whether our home can be taken from us has been emotionally and physically draining. We depend on our home for our self-employment and supplement our earnings with part-time and seasonal employment. It has been extremely difficult to depend on our ability to work at home and also to pursue employment in our area without the security of a stable home.

We are good tenants and responsible people, and we got a no-cause termination notice because we asked for repairs. We found an attorney to help us, but what happens to everyone else? We request to the committee to please support HB 2004 to provide fairness and stability for the millions of Oregonians who are renters.

Thank you.

Laura Cuccia-Nilsen

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