

My name is Laura M. Hawkins and I live at 45 se 73rd avenue in Portland, Oregon. Last June our on-site property managers left and a property management company from Eugene took over the apartment site. Within 8 weeks of their coming on board they started sending out rent increases depending on the apartment of about 80% above the current rent. They staggered the letters but now we all have them. My rent went from 655.00 to 1195. Our community was immediately impacted. Now we have several empty apartments and would have more except that many of us got in under the new tenant protection and were able to procure the under 10% rent raise. The people who had to leave early were long time renters who planted gardens, gave dinners and potlucks and generally paid the mortgage for the land lord over a very long time. If this ordinance had not passed, many other renters, especially older single women would have been terribly impacted.

One woman was planning on moving to Lebanon, Oregon and commuting an hour back to Portland for work, thus leaving her community of support and friendship. Another already left because of housing had to give up two beloved pets. Others were depressed and sad over very little choices for single apartments in an affordable price range. I am on a wait list for subsidized housing which now are flooded and hardly keeping up with the need to make sure the elderly have a safe, stable and secure home. Others who have lived independently were looking at moving in with their children. Grown women mostly do not want to do this and for some without children, isn't even a option.

I no longer feel safe or welcome in Portland and if I could move out would consider a move. When communities are broken like this, it impacts the web of continuity which makes life livable and enjoyable. Finding temporary housing while I wait for my number on the list caused an incredible amount of stress. Rooms cost about what I was paying for my apartment and they are looking for long time roomers and would be leaving when my number came up for independent subsidized housing. Portland considers itself a leader in the green movement, but with people constantly on the move it doesn't matter. Sustainability starts at home, a stable one with fair rents and continuous communities.

I would like to see emergency housing vouchers given in situations like this, but it is clear the only hope will be the continuing of this new legislation or rent control. We are in a crisis.

Sincerely,

Laura M. Hawkins