

I have written before and will include that letter here. Very simply Oregon is indeed in a housing crisis. The little apartment complex that I own has become a microcosm for all that is not working with the movement towards tenant rights.

We have a 13 unit apartment building and we have always kept it up well. Rents have been on the low side.. and because of the recession and also because we were not having any turn over. Our rents, in fact, are approximately \$400/month under market value. In the last 5 years we have been sinking a lot of money into some general projects: new roof, new paving, exterior lighting. We started raising rents very moderately: \$40/mo every 6 months to get the rents a little bit closer to market.

This strategy sparked a tenant revolution. Why? They were happy, they liked where they lived, and they decided to take it upon themselves to form a tenant union to tell the owners what we should to and what we should charge them for rent. Margot Black basically brainwashed tenants with her rhetoric of fear and hate towards landlords... and the whole situation escalated to be completely out of hand. Tenants stalked me personally and they sent letters of intimidation to my 87 year old father who built the property who now suffers from extreme dementia.

We decided to hand off the management of our property to professional property managers. So.. let's look at some of the simple math. Rents: \$875 per month... (market \$1,300). Landlords pay \$600 monthly for landscaping, \$700 for property managers (direct result of being harassed by tenants)... and of course we need to spend money on keeping things up. Those costs are real. Because of the harassment we received which of course landlords are supposed to just "take" because that is in vogue in Portland these days... we decided along with our property managers to transition from month to month leases to fixed term. Let me be clear--- this is a position the tenants forced us into as a response from their utterly ridiculous socialist revolution. They want tenants to run even privately owned apartments. I am not exaggerating. This is their goal.

I have never abused no cause evictions. I have evicted one person in 13 years for cause. But, I am telling you in clear and certain terms, landlords need to be able to manage their private investment with autonomy. We do not need to tolerate tenant unions in our face screaming about utterly silly things like we can't tell them to remove raspberries from the fence or we can't take down overgrown plants doing damage to our buildings they happen to like hanging their Christmas lights on.

My main ask is: do not do away with no cause evictions and invoke rent control. I asked my tenants to sign a fixed term lease. This offered 12 months of below market rent or the option to be evicted. 5 tenants decided to take the relocation money and run. Yet they were given the option to stay at a rate that was less than a 10% increase over the previous year.

Maybe there are some landlords out there pushing the rent increase envelope. But for those of us who aren't, and are taking very serious abuse and harassment as landlords.. we are asking you to not pass the bill in question today. It would be a colossal mistake.

Signed,

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My previous letter:

Dear Legislators,

As you head into this Legislative session, all eyes are upon you. You face a myriad of extremely complex problems without simple solutions in a political climate that is polarized and impatient beyond measure.

I am writing to you as a **landlord** a word that for many has become synonymous with heartless greed. For many landlords who have worked hard to manage costs, invest in property upkeep, and keep rents several hundred dollars a month below market, we definitely feel perplexed by the vehement anger we now receive as the supposed "bad guy." The real estate market has changed dramatically in recent years and rents have gone up. Many tenants blame raised rents on landlord greed and do not consider the expense of property maintenance or market factors. Not so many years ago, and for many years, Portland rents were extremely flat. Renters have confused recession pricing with guaranteed access to affordable housing.

It is true that in Portland and throughout Oregon rent increases have surpassed many people's income raises and yes, homelessness is a huge problem. Housing is an extremely emotional, complicated debate and what I am asking for is for legislatures to look deeply at the complexities. Right now the debate in Portland is completely polarized and oversimplified. No real solutions will come without wrestling with the enormous, messy complexities head on. Consider education, housing supply, business opportunities, mental health support... it is all connected. I ask for legislators to look at the housing crisis in all of its shades grey as finding real solutions does matter. As landlords we care about Oregon deeply and we care about tenants. Depicting the story of housing crises currently running as "greedy landlord" versus "exploited tenant" is not a cookie cutter that fits many real life situations.

I speak for myself. The mom and pop landlord. A 13-unit complex which my Father built in the 1970's. Our rents are well below market yet I have been stalked and threatened by a few of my tenants who are wrapped up in a "Tenant's Rights" frenzy. I get letters from tenants under the bizarre intoxication of completely irrational landlord haters at Portland Tenants United claiming that socialism will solve our problems.

I am writing to say: ENOUGH! Saying landlords are greedy exploiters may be a great way to vent frustrations but it will not lead you to real or lasting solutions because it is just not true for most. Further, landlords deserve to do their job without harassment. Right now even if we make small reasonable requests we are steam rolled with rage as if we are the manifestation of evil trying to disenfranchise tenant dignity.

ENOUGH. We can do better. We must do better. The problems we face in Oregon demands a better, smarter dialogue. Answers and solutions will not come easily and are made harder by rage vetted towards all landlords indiscriminately. You will be presented with strong cases arguing both sides of this debate with compelling data to support their positions. What you should know is that right now many mom and pop landlords who do not make any kind of real money in this business are the target of fear based hate. Please keep in mind that good landlords need good laws. Rent control and making it almost impossible to get rid of a bad tenant is going to cause most of us little guys seriously question if the disproportionate hassle and harassment we receive is worth to the small amount of income we make.

In closing, this legislative session will be about finding pathways to move forward to solutions or staying entrenched in our problems. My sincere hope is that we move forward into solutions.

