



March 2, 2017

Housing and Human Services
900 Court Street NE
Salem OR 97301

Good morning/afternoon Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Lisha Shrestha, and at present, civic involvement coordinator with Elders in Action. Elders in Action is a non-profit organization that educates advocates and provides direct services to vulnerable older adults in the Portland metro area.

The population of adults over age 60 is projected to increase by 57 % by 2025 and the increase in ratio is greater for elders of color. Out of 3000 calls per year, we receive at Elders in Action, affordable housing, transportation; abuse and isolation are major issues raised by elders. We hear many cases where elders could no longer afford their current home due to sudden and enormous increases in rent. In other cases, people report that they have received a no-cause eviction notice, even after being good tenants and paying their rent on-time for many years. In many cases the elders that contact us are in their eighties and even early 90s. It is often difficult for our elders to meet their basic needs like food, medicine, transportation when they are paying more than 60% of their income on rent. The sole income received by many of the older adults we hear from at Elders in Action is social security. For seniors on a fixed income, a sudden rent increase or an unexpected no-cause eviction can be devastating.

On top of the rent hikes and evictions, our elders are often treated unfairly by landlords. One of our Bhutanese elderly women was asked to sign to accept the maintenance cost in addition to her deposit, which was confiscated, while for years the apartment management company never adhered to their maintenance requests. I would like to request you to support these elders so that they would not be taken advantage of. We need to fund more affordable housing for elders, but we also need to protect fairness and stability for those who are currently vulnerable.

We encourage you to support the proposed rent stabilization and just cause eviction bill, HB 2004, before you leave this session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisha Shrestha', written over a horizontal line.

Lisha Shrestha
Civic Involvement Coordinator