



OPAL
Environmental Justice Oregon

opalpdx.org

3202 SE 82nd Ave, Suite B, Portland, OR 97266 | 503-774-4503

March 2, 2017

House Committee on Human Services and Housing

Oregon State Legislature

900 Court Street NE

Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB2004

Chair Keny- Guyer, Vice Chair Olson, Vice Chair Sanchez, Members of the Committee:

OPAL builds power for environmental justice and Civil Rights in our communities where we live, work, learn, play and pray. We advocate for a just transportation system, inclusive housing and investment without displacement, health equity, and empowered, engaged communities who enjoy equal access to opportunity.

The City of Portland and communities across the state are experiencing an unprecedented housing affordability crisis. We face an inadequate supply of affordable homes alongside rising rents, no-cause evictions, persistent homelessness, and a lack of local tools to address these issues. Renters and working families are continually priced out of their neighborhoods. Vulnerable families and individuals are at increased risk of experiencing homelessness. Currently, landlords may terminate a tenancy without providing a reason, severely disrupting tenants' lives and putting them at risk of homelessness. These evictions can also serve as a cover for retaliation when a tenant has requested a repair, or for discrimination. For these reasons, OPAL supports legislation to:

End No Cause Evictions – Current law permits landlords to end a tenant's lease without a reason. These "no-cause evictions" are a major contributor to Oregon's housing crisis. Instead of identifying a valid reason to remove a family from their home, some landlords are terminating leases to raise rents, or even worse, to retaliate or discriminate against certain tenants. We know the impacts of these No Cause evictions are having a devastating ripple effect, uprooting families and disrupting communities, and undermining our children's education and our local business's bottom line. **Just Cause eviction laws protect families and communities by supporting stability in our families, homes and communities.**

Enact Rent Stabilization – Rents are rising at record rates throughout the state, meaning that more Oregonians are losing their homes and fewer and fewer can find an affordable place to live. Limitless rent increases push families' budgets past the breaking point, forcing them to choose between paying their rent or buying essentials like food and medicine. There are few units available for rent, and even fewer units that are affordable. Oregon's housing crisis means families have little stability and entire

communities are being displaced. **Rent stabilization protects tenants from huge rent hikes while landlords get a fair rate of return by setting reasonable and gradual rate increases.**

Thank you for your consideration, and we are looking forward to working alongside you this session as you seek ways to address our housing crisis across Oregon, and to create opportunity through safe and stable homes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vivian Satterfield". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "V" and a long, sweeping tail.

Vivian Satterfield

Deputy Director