

Dear Oregon Legislature,

Thank you for making affordable housing a priority for this Legislative Session! I am writing this in support of HB 2004.

I am a member of a housing advocacy group through my church, and I also attend our local Homeless Leadership Coalition (HLC) advocacy meetings in Bend, Oregon. Between these two groups we were able to convince the Bend City Council to pass a 90 day no cause eviction ordinance last December. I believe that it would be better if no cause evictions were eliminated statewide, so that every eviction would need to be "for cause." "No cause" evictions are just too easy, as they allow landlords to move forward quickly on strictly profit motivations. Landlords must weigh what happens to tenants. "No cause" evictions cannot be legally challenged in court, so they create unjust situations.

Although I do not support strict rent controls, I might be induced into supporting the more modern and recent forms of rent control, especially in Oregon's large cities. However, I do not think even the moderate forms of rent control will work in Bend. As I understand it, rent control requires careful tracking of housing and rents by city government. Bend does not have the capacity to do that; we can't even keep the potholes filled.

However, I think the state of Oregon should pass legislation that would require county assessors to track rents in apartment complexes of more than 5 to 10 units. This could be accomplished by adding rent fields to existing assessor's offices' tax collection forms and then adding that data to their existing databases. Tax forms going out to apartment owners could request the range of rents and/or the median rent charged by each apartment complex. In this way Oregon would have data about rent amounts, and over the years we could see just how "market forces" raise rents.

I would also like to see property managers be more regulated. I believe that they cause rents to rise by increasing their fees. The owners then increase the rent to keep up with the property management fees. I have been told that some property managers go to even small landlords, someone who owns just one rental house, and tell them to raise the rent.

Please make life easier for renters, please add more items to HB 2004 and pass it.

Thanks for listening, Marilyn Burwell, 2379 NW 6th Street, Bend, Oregon 97703, mburwell@riousa.com