

Dear Legislators of my beloved state of Oregon:

This is my story about how the current lack of rental control and just-cause eviction in Oregon has affected me and continues to threaten my security of a place to live. I'm going through treatment for a life-threatening condition-- stability of home is critical to my ability to heal and unfortunately it does not seem to matter to my landlady who is free, at this moment, to issue a no-cause eviction after imposing a 30% rent increase that took effect this month; all despite the fact that she gladly acknowledges I have been an excellent tenant for six years. Therefore, in addition to rent control and just-cause eviction, I also want to encourage legislators to enact additional laws that protect people in vulnerable health situations or on disability.

I moved into my current small studio apartment in the Clinton neighborhood in April of 2011. After months of searching I was pleased to find a very nice, modest one-room unit, in a good, walkable location with low rent which increased only about 5-10% annually.

When I moved in I was in excellent health, fully employed and very active in my life and career. About 3 years later everything changed: I was diagnosed with an incurable blood cancer and quickly became dependent on donor blood which I had to take every couple of weeks while we waited for treatment to work, which took months. I was severely anemic and weak, and as you can imagine it was terrifying. I also lost my job. A charitable organization that helps people in my situation paid my rent directly to my landlady for a few months, so she learned of my condition and when I ran into her she seemed concerned about my pallor and weight-loss but my rent was raised again that year. I shared with her that I was making ends meet through savings, wiping out my retirement and a grant from the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society; while she seemed sympathetic, my rent continued to climb up but I never suggested otherwise.

However, when in November 2016, my rent was increased by 30%, taking over 70% of my fixed disability income (I was approved to receive Disability benefits SSI a few months before, which while very modest helped immensely and I am very grateful). About the same time in November 2016 I learned that my condition had returned and I would need to go back into treatment, the previous having been effective but short. I tried to communicate with my landlady about my continuing health struggle, inability to work and consequent inability to meet her increase. I tried to find a compromise at a more reasonable rate. I asked for just an additional 90 days so that I could get figure out what to do. Initially she seemed open to a different solution but soon replied formally that because of "illegal rent-control laws that have passed" she had to do this to protect her investment and finally she said, "the rent increase stays as it is".

This is a frightening situation. I am in no position, financially or physically, to move and the current rental market rates anywhere in Portland are equally prohibitive. The communication on this topic between us (as well as with other tenants whose rents also shot up 25-30%) grew increasingly tense so additionally, because of No-Cause

Eviction, we are all too worried about home insecurity to ask for any needed repair or even report a water leak in the basement.

Living with home insecurity in addition to life insecurity is no small thing. I understand other states have laws that protect people on disability or with life-threatening illnesses from huge rent hikes and no-cause-evictions and I want to urge you to add Oregon to that list. Lastly, as a caring and involved citizen but please consider that my story is just one that you hear out of many, many, many stories that will go unheard.

Thank you for your time and considering my testimony. If you have any questions you may reach me at this email ([tresmariana@yahoo.com](mailto:tresmariana@yahoo.com))

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