

To the legislature of the state of Oregon,

I write this letter in support of HB 2004 in its originally proposed form. The central question of this debate about rent stabilization and tenants right is a very basic one: **what is housing for?**

The people on the right side of this debate (pro tenant protections, pro rent stabilization) believe that **housing is for people to live in**. As such, we believe that the role of housing policy is to create a system in which every person has housing which is safe, stable, affordable, and appropriate to their needs. In addition, we believe that if people or private companies can make good profits by participating in such a system, that's great. It makes the whole thing run more smoothly. However, the first priority is a housing system which houses people. That piece is non-negotiable.

The people on the other side of the debate order their priorities differently. **To them, housing is first and foremost a business**, and it exists to make money. Because they are generally good people, they also think it would be great if the housing system could house people adequately while making money. However, the first priority is their profits. They would sooner see thousands of people homeless or in untenable housing arrangements than work to create a housing system whose first priority is housing people. We know this is true because we live in that world right now.

That's the question before the State of Oregon right now: **what are our priorities?** When we have to choose between a landlord receiving maximum profit and a person having housing which is safe, stable, affordable, and appropriate to their needs, **which will we choose?** It would be nice if we never had to choose, but sometimes we do. Now is one of those times. Stand with the majority of Oregonians who have little control over our own housing. We will remember.

Regards,
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