

"To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing you urging your support of HB 2004. My name's Judith Lienhard. I own a condo but have rented for much of my life, have lived in Portland for the last 16 years and intend to stay here, am a nurse and veteran.

Tenants deserve accountability when they are subject to something as life-altering as being kicked out of one's home, but no-cause evictions do not allow for dignity or accountability. Fear-mongering landlords who covet the no-cause evictions as a way to deal with "problem tenants" complain about the burden it puts on them to have to "prove" their tenant did something wrong, but it should give us grave pause that they are literally asking to maintain the privilege to kick people out of their home when evidence and proof of wrong-doing are lacking. They are a no-cost loophole to justice, and a free pass to racial and other forms of discrimination/retaliation. Multnomah County is reading Matthew Desmond's "Evicted: poverty and profit in the American City" thanks to the library's "Everybody Reads" program, there is a heightened sense of threat to public health and well being, to say nothing of community values, when unaccountable landlords kick people out of their homes.

And while this bill does not itself create rent control, I believe that cities and counties should be able to decide what's best for them in their region. The legislature is not being asked to debate the merits of rent-control as such. That is for cities and counties to debate and decide. What's clear about the history of rent control though is that it protects existing tenants and creates residential stability that directly benefits tenants and in turn the communities they get to remain in (or leave on their own terms). Shackling the political will of places like Portland or Eugene, or Multnomah or Lane Counties, to the interests of a consortium of housing-profiteers has gone on for far too long.

Thank You,

Judith Lienhard, Portland Oregon 97225