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To: House Committee on Human Services and Housing

From: Scott Harrington

RE: HB 2004

Hello Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice-Chairs Olson and Sanchez, Committee Members, thank you for allowing me to speak to you,

My name is Scott Harrington and I'm a student at Linn-Benton Community College, where I sit on the Student Leadership Council. I am also a resident of the city of Corvallis. I live there with my significant other and our two cats. Our rent is \$750 a month for a one-bedroom apartment that has noisy neighbors, issues with mold, and cardboard lining the cupboards. I pay for this apartment using my fixed social security income, which I collect due to ongoing mental health issues. These payments are currently capped at a maximum of \$735 a month for anyone in the United States. This is just \$14 more than when I moved to Corvallis three years ago. To compare, our rent has increased \$125 in the same three-year period. Our lease is up for renewal in six months, and we are expecting yet another large increase to that amount. If this trend continues, I may be forced to drop out of school in order to afford to live or be priced out of Corvallis entirely. I can't allow that to happen. I love my city and the people in it. I want to stay there and continue to improve my life and finish my education. I want to overcome my personal issues and contribute to the community that I have come to call home. But I can't do that if I can't even afford to live there.

No-cause evictions and high rent prices cause a level of stress and anxiety that many people can never dream of. Yet many here in Oregon, students and non-students, deal with that stress every day. We run the risk of becoming homeless should we simply disagree with a property manager, or even worse ask for repairs to be made. For students, this comes during a time in which we should be experiencing new things, educating ourselves, exploring our interests, and giving back to our community. Instead we are here asking you for basic decency and common sense regulations and tenant protections. We are here asking your help to support the betterment of our communities, and ensure that Oregon residents have a stable home to return to. To accomplish this, I want to ask you, the committee members, to please give your support to HB 2004, so that we can lift the current ban on rent stabilization and eliminate no-cause evictions. With your passage of this legislation, you can give students and residents the stability needed so that we can begin to work together as tenants and as landlords to come to an agreement on what is fair and what is affordable. If the ban remains in place, the conversation remains wholly one-sided and our struggles continue. Thank you for your time.