



3 May 2017

Senator Sara Gelser, Chair
Members of the Senate Human Services Committee
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Chair Gelser and Senators,

Children First for Oregon advocates for long-term, systemic change by advocating for policies and programs that keep children healthy and safe and strengthen families. We write in support of HB 2004A because 43% of households with children in Oregon are renters. Additionally, 23% of women with young children work in low-wage jobs. This bill stands at the nexus of those two important facts. With historically low-vacancy rates, the laws of supply-and-demand alone have led to massive increases in rents. When a family risks eviction for no-cause in 30 days or for a sudden increase in rent, the threat of homelessness can quickly become a reality.

For working mothers, one might assume that losing a job often causes an eviction, but according to research, it is more often the opposite – an eviction causes the loss of a job.¹ These evictions affect women with their children more than other group. Evicted mothers are more than twice as likely to report that their children to be in poor health compared to mothers who have not experienced eviction.² This is not merely an urban issue; between 2009 and 2013, more than half of renting households in every area of the state were “rent burdened”, spending over 30% of their income on housing.

Allowing local jurisdictions to consider rent stabilization measures and stopping no cause evictions will help children across Oregon enjoy the simple benefit of knowing where they will sleep tonight. We, along with 28 partners in the United for Kids Children’s Agenda, urge you to join us in our support of HB 2004A.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Cushwa
Strategic Director

¹ Matthew Desmond and Carl Gershenson, “Housing and Employment Insecurity among the Working Poor,” *Social Problems*, 2016, 63, 46–67

<http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/mdesmond/files/desmondgershenson.socprob.2016.pdf?m=1454020332>

² Matthew Desmond and Rachel Tolbert Kimbro “Eviction’s Fallout: Housing, Hardship, and Health,” *Soc Forces* (2015) 94 (1): 295-324, <https://academic.oup.com/sf/article-abstract/94/1/295/1754025/Eviction-s-Fallout-Housing-Hardship-and-Health?sid=3d968290-ac12-49dd-a27f-9dd91e2f2c94>