

# Ed Pischedda

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ATTN: Committee Assistant Corey Rosenberg  
Committee Chair Sara Gelser  
Committee Vice-Chair Alan Olsen  
Committee Members Michael Dembrow, Tim Knopp and Laurie Mones Anderson  
Oregon Senate Committee on Human Services  
900 Court Street NE – Room 453  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Support for HB 2004A “Relating to Residential Tenancies; Declaring an Emergency”

Chair Gelser, Vice Chair Olsen and Members of the Committee,

HB 2004A deserves your support. Homelessness is rampant in Oregon’s cities and passage of the proposed legislation, while more tepid than I would prefer, is the most effective tool at hand for Oregon’s elected leaders to address this critical issue.

Existing Oregon law has fomented the current housing crisis in that it allows landlords to suddenly take advantage of rapidly rising real estate prices by dishing out double- and even triple-digit rent increases, accompanied by a no-cause eviction notice in the alternative, to their tenants many of whom have lived quietly in their rental homes for years if not decades, on fixed incomes in many cases. Such rent increases usually constitute a crisis for typical long-term tenants, usually forcing them to have to seek new housing but whom, given that real-estate prices tend to rise across entire communities, often find local alternatives non-existent, and even if local alternative housing is extant, suddenly being confronted with hundreds, usually thousands, of dollars in moving costs is simply prohibitive. In any case, the consequence of the lack of restriction on, and short notice for, such rent increases is at best fragmented communities and disrupted families; unfortunately, all too often abject homelessness is an increasingly common outcome.

I have lived in Oregon since 1986 but have been away for most of the last dozen years, having only returned recently. This absence has caused me to take notice of an obvious sharp increase in homelessness in that time in Portland, where entire villages of people sheltering under blue tarps suspended from discarded wooden shipping pallets and shopping carts are an increasingly common sight in the area’s publicly-owned tracts. I understand similar scenarios are in play across the state, where homelessness, particularly among families with children, is at a level unprecedented in recent memory. Such a critical state of affairs is unacceptable in a civilized society, especially one as affluent as ours.

The proposed legislation addresses the problem at hand by restricting the sudden serving of thirty-day no-cause tenancy termination notices on long-term tenants, by providing for very modest tenant relocation financial assistance by larger landlords, and by allowing local communities to consider the adoption of rent-increase-amelioration measures should these communities deem them necessary and prudent.

Since homelessness is an increasingly statewide problem it is proper for the State to devote attention to this matter. Yet local communities need the freedom to more quickly respond to needs engendered by local housing crises. The measures in the proposed legislation pose no threat to property-owning landlords whose primary interest lies in providing adequately-maintained affordable homes to members of the local community; accordingly I urge you to vote for this legislation and pass it on to the full Senate.

Best regards,



Ed Pischedda

CC: Oregon State Senator Kathleen Taylor  
Oregon State Senate President Peter Courtney