

Rosenberg Corey

From: Frieda Christopher <friedajc@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 03, 2017 8:35 AM
To: SHS Exhibits
Cc: Sen Courtney; Sen Monroe; Sen.MichaelDembrow@state.or.us; J Mulvey
Subject: HB2004A

Importance: High

My name is Frieda Christopher. I am Co-Chair of East Portland Action Plan Housing Sub-committee (6 years) and a member of the David Douglas School Board (26 years). The residents of East Portland and David Douglas community are some of the most diverse and vulnerable residents of our state. What was once an affordable area of Portland to live in no longer is the case. In the past couple of years we have seen an increase in “no cause” evictions and steep rent increases often driving these vulnerable residents into homelessness. We are in a housing crisis in Portland and many other areas of Oregon. We know a shortage of affordable housing is part of the problems, but another factor is landlords who want to profit as much as they can from the current crisis without a care to what happens to tenants.

As a school board member I have seen a drop in enrollment as residents are pushed farther out to the fringes of the county and often to other areas of Oregon where rent is more affordable. This puts them in places that often lack the services and transit. It puts them farther from their jobs and often unavailable to get to their jobs because transit service is limited and their income cannot support a car. The housing instability this crisis is causing has a direct impact on the children in our district. David Douglas School District is recognized by the state for closing the achievement gap and our work with our immigrant population. Our population of vulnerable students need stable housing. Research shows that stable housing is a factor in a student being able to reach benchmark in reading by 3rd grade and thus more likely to graduate on time. A student’s success is dependent on stable housing.

Unlike many neighborhoods that say “not in my neighborhood”, in East Portland we are working on anti-displacement of our residents. We embrace our diversity and believe our vulnerable residents should not be driven out of their neighborhoods by gentrification and landlord greed.

I believe the amendments to answer the concerns of landlords are fair. I also believe a local entity should determine if rent control is necessary during a housing emergency. It is time to give the local entities the tools to handle the crisis. In addition, it is time for additional tenant protections. Though there are many good landlords that do not require these actions, unfortunately there are many other landlords that do.

I ask that you support HB2004A.

Thank you for consideration of my statement.

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