

May 3, 2017

The Honorable Chair Gelser
Chair, Senate Human Services Committee
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Gelser and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Women's Health and Wellness Alliance (OWHWA), is a group of legislators, health care personnel, state and local agency staff and citizen advocates, who are dedicated to promoting the health, safety and economic well-being of women. The Co-Chairs of the OWHWA strongly support HB 2004A, and encourage the committee's thoughtful consideration of this legislation.

Of the forty percent of Oregonians that are renters, many are negatively impacted by no cause evictions. Due to low vacancy rates and increasing rents, families that are displaced due to eviction or rent increases often find it extremely difficult to secure housing that they can afford. This is especially true for Oregonians who are particularly vulnerable to displacement: people of color, those who work for low wages, seniors, and individuals with disabilities who live on fixed incomes.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, in 2016 Oregon had the second highest rate of un-sheltered homelessness in the country. The need for shelter beds—for individuals and families—far outweighs the space available; leaving Oregonians who have been evicted or priced out without affordable options. Displacement impacts the individuals and families who are forced to move, and weighs on communities across the state.

HB 2004A protects Oregonians against unfair evictions and provides the option for local jurisdictions to stabilize rents. HB 2004A empowers all Oregonians in the housing market, allowing cities to include both tenants and landlords in the decision-making process to create policies that work best for their communities. OWHWA appreciates the committee's thoughtful consideration of this bill, and urges your support for HB 2004A.

Sincerely,

The OWHWA Co-Chairs:



Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward



Representative Karin Power



Senator Kathleen Taylor



Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer