

From the Desk of  
Senator  
James Ivory Manning Jr.



## Legislature should work to keep children, seniors in safe housing

**House Bill would help families avoid evictions and prevent seniors from choosing between rent and medicine.**

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As lawmakers debate House Bill 2004A, we hope they keep in mind the importance of stable and affordable housing to our state's children and seniors.

AARP and Children First for Oregon are part of a broad group of concerned organizations working to pass this important legislation, which will limit the unfair practice of evicting people without cause and without resources to find a new home.

Imagine how frightening it is for a senior to see a notice on her door telling her of a double-digit rent increase or, even worse, an eviction so the property management company can rent to someone who isn't on a fixed income.

Imagine the distress of parents who also get that notice and now must face pulling their children from school or having to take a second job to pay the rent.

This is happening in every part of our state and it's having a terrible impact on both the young and old.

Here are the facts:

43% of households with children in Oregon are renters. Additionally, 23% of women with young children work in low-wage jobs. HB 2004 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 faces eviction for no-cause in 30 days or a sudden increase in rent, the threat of homelessness can quickly become a reality.

Evictions throw families into chaos. Research shows that evictions can lead to job loss for a parent, making things even worse. Additionally, evicted mothers are more than twice as likely to report that their children are in poor health compared to mothers who have not experienced eviction. 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.

This situation in our state is equally urgent for seniors. More than 22% of people in 65+ households are renters and that number is growing. If we don't take action today, an increasing number of seniors will be forced out of their homes and lose their independence. Even today more than 40% of renters 50 and over pay more than 30% of their income on housing and older Oregonians are even more squeezed. Fifty-five percent of those 85 years and older pay 50% of their income on housing. That means they are already making difficult choices between rent, food and medicine. They simply cannot afford skyrocketing rents

Loss of a home can mean loss of community ties, displacement, and even premature, unnecessary and costly institutionalization at tax-payer's expense.

This is why Children First for Oregon and AARP urge lawmakers to support HB 2004A. Children and seniors can't wait.

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