

From: [Bill Flowers](#)
To: [J1SS Exhibits](#)
Subject: no evictions?!
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I rent to many low-income people, and it's not easy dealing with tenants who have poor life skills, no job skills and very little income. This includes felons, sex offenders, older people who can't afford assisted living, and young people who are starting out. Many live on less than \$1000 a month, sometimes as little as \$790. If rent is more than \$550, they can't manage it. They have slim chances of landing decent housing. It is satisfying to give people a chance, but with the new ordinances, it's become more than challenging.

Another issue, one that seems to have been overlooked, is the difficulty of selling a rental home with tenants. In the last few months we have tried to sell two rentals to get funds to put towards a new low-income housing project. Motivated buyers retracted their offers, because they needed more immediate possession than the new ordinances allow. We couldn't close the sales, because, we had to give three-months notice to tenants sharing the big homes, plus the \$4500 relocation awards. Worse, some tenants are refusing to move "knowing" they have six months before we can evict them, even while not paying rent. "You can't evict us nowadays, no matter what," they say. Now, we can't go to court to sort this out.

I'm liberal and sympathetic to people in need -- probably as much as anyone. I find satisfaction in giving people chances, often second chances. Occasionally, unfortunately, it's impossible to accommodate tenants who are unable to cope, and who are caustic with their housemates. Their addictions or mental problems, often both, can become dangerous, but even if there is no actual physical danger, it makes it impossible for the other housemates to live with them.. Managers have to protect the majority which includes the ability to evict. Lately, that ability has been taken away by the virus shutdown of the courts, but also because of the moratorium on evictions.

Eviction is an owner's only way to responsibly manage a property. The court already had adequate rules in place to protect tenants, decades-long rules that were honed to be fair. But If property owners can't evict, rentals won't work. For all kinds of reasons, many renters can't navigate the complexities of ownership, so rentals fill the bill. As an owner, I thought I could manage, but I'm not lately. Lawyers are also attempting to navigate the new ordinances, but in my experience in the last year, they too are forced to make guesses. They have to go to court to get decisions from a judges who themselves are also trying to make sense of the new ordinances. Lawyers are a big cost to owners. There are too many gray areas now. With all this static and the new hurdles, investors are hesitating to invest in rental property. How does a tenant catch up on the rent when they fall six months in the hole? How much a month do they have to pay even if they try to catch up? Are late fees out of play? Tenants sometimes will choose to dig a hole for six months, because the current rules allow that. And their arithmetic makes sense. But when tenants do fall behind that much, they will more likely never be able to catch up,

eventually having to vacate. It's true: 50% of the population can't lay their hands on \$500 in an emergency. Unfortunately, many tenants don't plan far enough into the future or, to say it more sympathetically, never got the chance to learn how.

As the new ordinances have come into effect, agents are saying investors are drifting away from Portland. With fewer investors, it will make things worse. Our new ordinances are killing the golden goose. Evictions have many safeguards for the tenant, and that protection is there to keep ruthless property owners in check. That's fine, and Oregon has helped lead the way with those solid protections. Eventually, however, property managers and owners have to maintain order and even safety. We may be embarrassed to say words like "protect the investment," but, in the end, that is also necessary. Now, I have tenants who are working (luckily) and making enough to pay rent (\$580 including utilities), but feel they don't have to pay rent "according to the latest rules."

Please don't dump the homeless problem onto property owners. It's a short term fix but will finally backfire. Potential investors have put on hold our plans for a three-story micro-unit project plus two low-income four-plexes. We have another, bigger project on the back burner but will wait to see how the new ordinances play out. It seems to be getting less likely. By the way, these projects were to be done in Portland, without help from government agencies. The private market can work, but not with too many more hurdles.

Please excuse the ramble and grammar, but I wanted to get this note in before the deadline today.