



January 28, 2019

Dear Chair Fagan, Vice Chair Girod, Members of the Committee,

My name is Caitlyn Kennedy and I live in your district in the Lents Neighborhood of Portland. I am asking for your support on Senate Bill 608, the tenant protections bill, because I know that everyone deserves a safe and stable place to call home.

I work for Transition Projects located in Portland. Transition Projects provides individuals with the services, resources and tools they need to end their homelessness, secure housing, and maintain that housing. Each year, we assist more than 10,000 people experiencing homelessness. We are entering our 50th year of service and we want to do more. However, with rents increasing so quickly and the ever-looming feared of no-cause evictions our ability to help some many more individuals in need our support is jeopardized.

I, myself, have been a recipient of a sudden no-cause notice from a landlord that saw the opportunity to remove the current tenants, increase the rent by 40%, and then re-rent our home. This was both an emotionally and financially devastating moment for myself. This sudden need to relocate burned through all the funds that I had been working hard to save up for a down-payment on my first home. This move also displaced me from the community that I had become a part of and loved.

Though I wish I could say that my story is unique to me, that is simply not true. Many communities are torn apart because of sudden no-cause evictions or unaffordable rent hikes. Children are being ripped from their schools, friends, and routines. Families are now struggling to maintain jobs that they now have to commute much longer to. Many of my colleagues that I work with, both at my job and throughout the non-profit community also struggle to walk the very fine line between providing services to those that are homeless and becoming individuals that needs those very services that we provide.

So many people who rent their homes are depending on the Legislature to act this session to provide basic protections and stability. We know we need to address a range of solutions to solve the housing problems facing our communities and one of those solutions is strengthening the supports given to tenants. It is critical the Legislature act now to pass SB 608.

Thank you so much for your time and I count on your vote to support SB 608.

Respectfully,

Caitlyn Kennedy | Rent Well Program Administrator
Transition Projects

from homelessness to housing