

February 1, 2019

Senator Shemia Fagan, Chair  
Senate Committee on Housing  
900 Court Street NE, HR B  
Salem, OR 97301

**RE: Support for SB 608, Tenant protections**

Dear Senator Fagan and Members of the Committee:

I work at a medical lab in Bend that serves most of Oregon East of the Cascades. We have been understaffed for four years as potential hires decline our offers citing the difficulty of finding affordable housing.

The specialists we need often come from urban areas with the same housing issues. But, when they can find another job in that same urban area without also competing for new housing accommodations, it means Bend and the people we serve in rural Oregon lose their talent.

I can personally attest that the difficulty renters face in Bend would be helped by the protections under SB 608. When I moved to Bend for work shortly after graduating college five years ago, rent was merely HALF of my individual take home pay at \$995/month. Luckily, I have a roommate to split the cost.

When I leave Bend this Fall, rent will be \$1647/month and my employer's staffing shortage will be exacerbated.

It's not that my boss is stingy. My hourly pay has risen 8-percent over five years versus a rent increase of 66-percent!

I understand that tenant protections can impact the willingness of landlords to provide rental housing. But this simply is not sustainable.

I believe the modest measures included in this bill would help level the playing field for working families. It will allow workers to focus on their own personal growth without the added stress of worrying whether they can still afford to live here next year. And it will help employers find and retain skilled workers.

I encourage you to move SB 608 forward with a do pass recommendation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Eric Lint