

From:
To: [Exhibits SHOUS](#)
Subject: SB 608 Testimony
Date: Thursday, January 31, 2019 11:47:13 PM

Dear Senate Committee on Housing,

I am writing in regard to serious concerns I have about SB 608. I, like many other Democrats, campaigned against Senator Monroe because of his opposition to strong tenant protections. I personally campaigned for Kayse Jama, but I was thrilled to see how resoundingly Senator Fagan defeated Senator Monroe and I, like others, assumed this to be a mandate for strong tenant protections.

Unfortunately, it appears that the outcome of our campaign efforts is to get a bill that does not substantively change the risk for economic evictions in our most at risk communities. I am happy to see the focus on preemption of no cause evictions, but the cap at 7% rent increase is absurd. I do not know a single person who routinely gets even a cost of living increase at 2 to 3% per year, certainly they do not see a 7% rise in their income, yet we want to allow our property owners and landlords to see a return that can be guaranteed year over year if they opt for the maximum increase. This type of cap would lead to riots in the street in other big cities and this is simply not a reasonable limit to set for any rent increase that would aim to help our low income communities.

Additionally, it is a glaring flaw in the bill that the preemption for localities to opt for their own tenant protections legislation remains intact. It is a common sense change to remove the preemption for local rent control laws. It is unacceptable that as progressive elected officials win seats around the state that we are continuing to kneecap progressive legislation with this type of preemption.

I do not know a single person who could sustain a 7% rent increase and I cannot understand how, with a Democratic supermajority, that we are still writing and trying to pass laws that benefit the most privileged in our society over the needs of the vast majority of Oregonians. This bill needs to be taken back to committee, re-written to include a much lower cap (2% at most), remove the local preemption clause and create meaningful reform that will actually help poor and low income people stay in their homes. We need to reject the money and power of the landlord lobby and stand firm with the most vulnerable in our state.

Respectfully,
Leah Gibbs, DVM