



My name is Lorenzo Martinez. I live in Vancouver currently because of the high cost of apartments in Portland. I would rather live in Portland since that's where I work. I have worked the same full-time job for over ten years, working as a maintenance manager and as a member of SEIU Local 49.

Even though my wife and I both work full-time, in the last three years we have had to move three times, trying to find a place that we can afford. Every time we move somewhere we think we can afford, our rent gets increased. Three years ago we were paying \$1150 per month in rent, and we got notice that it was going to increase to \$1300, which we couldn't afford. We moved into a new apartment that required a year-long contract, and two months after we moved in, we were informed that the rent was increasing to \$1450. After our contract was up, we moved into a new apartment that only charged \$1025, but a few months later we got notice that we were going to have to start paying for the utilities such as trash and water that used to be included in the rent. At the one-year mark of our contract at this apartment, I also got notice that rent was going to be increased by \$200. My wife and I's earnings have just not increased that much, so now I am looking for a new apartment.

These moves have been especially hard on my kids. Every time we've moved, they've had to start over at a new school and have lost all their friends. My oldest daughter has now been diagnosed with depression, and her condition has been exacerbated by the stress that has been

created by these constant moves. Our current apartment isn't on a bus route, so getting the kids to and from school every day has created extra stress on the family.

With what we are paying in rent right now versus what we earn, there is not enough left over for other costs that have come up. For example, my car broke down about four months ago. Now my wife and I share one car, and neither of our jobs are accessible by public transportation. Because of this, my schedule is as follows:

- Off work at midnight
- 3:30 am – drive wife to work
- 6:45 am – wake up son and drive him to school (he has special needs so he doesn't go to the same school as my daughter)
- 8:30 am – drive my oldest daughter to school
- 9 am – 1 pm – sleep
- 1 pm – leave to pick up wife and kids, then drive to work

So right now I am trying to survive on around 4 hours of sleep per day. It is really hard and bad on my health and my mood.

If there was a limit on how much our rent could be increased each year, and protections from getting kicked out of an apartment for no reason, it would take a lot of stress off of me and my family. It would mean a lot for my kid's well-being and education too, and I feel that this would mean that they could be better citizens and contribute more when they grow up.