



Claire Hall County Commissioner

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House Human Services and Housing Committee
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice-Chair Noble, Vice-Chair Sanchez, members of the Committee:

My name is Claire Hall. I'm currently in my fourth term as a Lincoln County Commissioner and housing and homelessness have been my top priority during my entire time in office. Last year, Governor Brown appointed me to the Housing Stability Council. I am board chair for our local family homeless shelter, and previously served in the board of our domestic violence shelter. I write today to strongly encourage your support of SB 608, the tenant protection bill.

Every Oregonian deserves a safe, stable, affordable place to call home. Unfortunately, our housing deficit is enormous—more than 155,000 units according to a recent presentation to the Housing Stability Council. We are making heroic efforts to close that gap, but that will take a long time. In the meantime, tenants are at the mercy of landlords who can impose unlimited rent increases and resort to no-cause evictions in order to turn over a unit and rent it at a higher rate of return.

I'm not a fan of government stepping in to restrict private property rights, but I believe we've reached the point where this measure is needed and justified. In many communities (my own home community of Newport has a rental vacancy rate of less than one percent), an eviction is tantamount to homelessness and likely loss of a job.

SB 608 is a balanced approach that protects property owners' investments while guaranteeing tenants essential peace of mind. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Claire Hall
Lincoln County Commissioner

