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Subject: Written testimony for SB 1533
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I am offering testimony on behalf and in favor of SB 1533.

To do so, I want to share a story, that happened recently after the adoption of SB 608. Mine is a family of three. My husband is a disabled vet, my son is an autistic teenager and I am self employed. We had rented from our landlady for 11 years, late twice in the entire 11 yrs. We were always introduced to new renters in our group of duplexes as people who loved living there and always willing to help if people needed anything. In the time we had been there, we had seen our rent double over the years. From \$625 to \$1250 in 11 years. We had none of the upgrades the other units got over the years, but yet we stayed cause it was home. Our landlady was good to us and even though she would take forever to have things fixed, we didnt mind being patient and never took a legal route to get things fixed; like the three out of four heaters that didnt work for a year and a half. We only complained and pushed about the garage not being able to lock (after 5 yrs) when our son's Scout camping equipment was stolen from our closed garage. I washed my dishes in the bathtub for the last year and a half because even though I had notified my landlady, her father had died, she was taking over his estate and such and we felt bad we had to say anything.

Life was fine, we cared for our home, paid our rent on time, and we were beyond patient with our landlady. Especially since Corvallis has a Livability Code to keep landlords from failing to do their due diligence for their renters, but we never turned her in cause we figured, she always gets around to it eventually.

In September, we got a call late one night, she was going to sell the duplex, and they were coming over the next day to see the unit. Not even a 24 hour notice. I warned her, the house was a mess. My husband had been in and out of the hospital and between spending time there and making sure my kiddo was stable and at school, the house was a mess. She was furious our home wasnt in "show condition" ~ we didnt even know she was considering selling the place! Three days later, we got a eviction notice under the new renovation clause. However, she wrote the documentation to say that she owned 4 or less units.

I've rented from her for 11 years. Seen her go through 5 business name changes and four banks. I know where all she has units, cause we talked like friends. I knew she owned more than four units. I called my local legal aid, and the Corvallis Housing & Neighborhood Services for help and advice. "Write a letter, show her you know and can prove she has more rentals and ask her to re-issue the eviction notice and provide the one months' rent per SB 608." So I did exactly what they suggested. I mean, SB 608 was there to protect me, right?

She was bringing by inspectors to see the house (again with less than 24hr notice) but I had to be at the hospital to talk to my husband's doctors. He has PTSD and a lousy short term memory. Someone had to be there to remember what the doctors talked to him about. So I left a note on my door for my landlady, laid out my proof and presented my case, asked her to do exactly as I had been told and reminded her we had 11 years as tenant/landlady and surely we could work this out. I breathed a bit of relief, thinking this all was just a mistake and she was a good person and would fix it.

The next day I brought my husband home from the hospital. Five minutes later, DHS was knocking on my door due to a complaint that my son was living in unsafe conditions and "crawling through tunnels of trash" to get to his room. I immediately let them in and they saw for their own eyes that the complaint was further from the truth. The investigation was immediately closed. And while they could not legally tell us who provided the complaint, they could tell us the time the complaint was called in: 10 minutes after my landlady was going to be at my duplex with the inspectors.

So now I have a household already stressed out due to a sudden eviction, now the stress gets compounded by a DHS visit. A week later, Corvallis Livability shows up on complaints against us. By this point I am at the breaking point and scared to open my own door, answer my phone or even check the mail. Corvallis Livability drops the complaints against us, and when they wanted to open a complaint against her, I begged them not to since she was trying to sell and I was scared what more would rain down on us if they did.

I did everything I was advised to do. There are no protections for this kind of retaliation from a landlord when you ask them to do the right thing. And when a tenant is desperately trying to come up with money to move, they have no ability to pay for a lawyer to hold the landlord accountable for their actions. And when I called back to Legal Aid? There was nothing more they could do for me.

I know this bill scares landlords, but the retaliatory tactics are just as scary for the tenants. And we have even less protection and access to legal assistance if a landlord decides to go to the lengths that mine did. Tenants need to be able to access some sort of legal assistance that does more than advise you write the landlord a letter and ask them to do what legally they should be. Tenants need to feel like someone has their back. There are lots of organizations that fight for the rights of the landlord and will help the landlord with legal assistance to battle a tenant.

I had to fight my landlady on my own and had to deal with the immense retaliatory tactics she employed all because I could prove she owned more units and legally was required to pay us the relocation assistance. The refusal to write a \$1250 check has scarred my family. Please allow SB 1533 to pass, so other tenants have the protection and proper legal assistance my family didn't have.

Christy Henderson