

From: [Linda Jacobs](#)
To: [HWREC Exhibits](#)
Subject: Written Testimony on Wildfire Recovery
Date: Saturday, February 13, 2021 3:36:35 PM

Dear Members of the Special Committee on Wildfire Recovery,

My husband and I live in the only mobile home park left standing in Phoenix after the September 8 wildfire last year, Rogue Valley South, a 55+ community at 4624 South Pacific Highway. We were evacuated for eight days during that fire, which burned most of the properties directly across the street from us and for miles in each direction. We had only one exit for 67 units to use to escape the fire. We incurred significant expenses for lodging and food during those eight days, and for spoiled food we had to replace when we returned home.

Neither the owner of the park, Richard L. Goergen of North Bend, nor the liaison for Commonwealth Real Estate Services in Portland that manages our park, Jim Ryan, contacted any of us to inquire about our well-being or to express appreciation for the fact that all of us are safe and our homes are intact; we heard nothing. Instead, just five months after we survived the fire, Commonwealth, through Jim Ryan, sent us all notice that our rents will increase the maximum amount allowed as of May 1 2021, \$40/month for most of us. The letter was exactly the same as the rent increase notice we received last year, saying they "appreciate" our tenancy and that they "continue to work hard to maintain and improve the park." Nothing could be further from the truth. In the five years I've lived here the only improvement made was to patch the cracks in the streets, and those are cracking open again. Our lampposts are held together with duct tape. Residents supply the furniture in the clubhouse and around the pool. Our mailboxes are not secured and have been pilfered – a bus stop is only yards away. We have asked for improvements but our many phone calls and letters go unanswered.

After the wildfire we contacted Jim Ryan to express our desire to work with Commonwealth to create a second exit from the park so that all of us can evacuate safely in the event of another wildfire. We received no response. Commonwealth Real Estate Services raises our rent every year - to the maximum allowed amount.

The rent cap of 7% plus CID is too high. Something must be done to protect those of us on fixed incomes and those of us whose incomes are low; mobile/manufactured home park living is intended as an affordable/low income solution to unaffordable housing. It's moving past that. When we moved into Rogue Valley South, our monthly space rent was around \$400; at the rate our rent is increasing, by 2025 it will be \$1040. This is unconscionable. Already, with just a \$40 increase this year, some of our neighbors will be choosing between rent and food.

I'm writing this letter to urge the Oregon State Legislature to immediately work to reduce the rent cap on mobile home/manufactured housing. I understand that work has begun but that it's being tabled until the next session. This must not happen – we need reform in this area with all due haste. I also want to suggest legislation requiring all Oregon mobile/manufactured home parks to have more than one exit

available in the event of a need to evacuate.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my opinion and to let you know of this most urgent need.

Sincerely,

Linda Jacobs
4624 South Pacific Hwy #11
Phoenix, OR 97535