

Dear Ways and Means,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak about the great state of Oregon.

I have been a landlord in Salem for over 40 years. I have watched the housing industry flourish and now decline into a shortage. We need to work together to make the Oregon Housing situation better for everyone in the long term.

As we all know, one of the biggest problems facing all Oregonians is the lack of housing, in particular affordable housing. We need to make changes now to promote investments in rental housing.

There are more tenants than rentals available. In Salem today, the vacancy rate for rental houses is less than one percent. Rents are at an all time high. The problem is, over the last few years the Oregon Landlord/Tenant laws have changed to lean very heavily in favor of the Tenants. Because of this, Landlords have been selling their rental properties and investors are taking their money elsewhere. I meet tenants every week that their landlord is selling or has already sold the house they live in and they do not know what to do. Long term, this will lead to less properties available for rent, give tenants fewer options, lead to higher rents and an increase homelessness.

In Idaho, they have very few landlord/tenant regulations. They also have many investors and an abundance of available housing. I personally know several people that have sold their properties in Oregon, because of the unfairness of the landlord/tenant laws, and have reinvested in the housing market in Idaho.

We have made many attempts to help tenants that have difficulties with new regulations, but in the long run, regulations hurt all tenants and landlords. SB 608 is a great example of that. Removing the no cause notice from landlords basically means any month to month rental agreement we make with a tenant gives that tenant the right to live at that property until they pass away. The landlord is stuck with basically a permanent lease that they can not change, but the tenant can terminate that lease with a 30 day notice. The property owner basically has no rights to control the property they own. Yes, there are some very limited provisions allowing the landlord to sell the property, then give a 90 day notice to the tenant, but that process is impossible to work with. Showing a house that has not be cleaned up, to a prospective buyer, who would have to apply for a loan and wait at least 90 days to take possession and make repairs is Not a workable situation. Shouldn't the property owner have equal rights with the property they own? Not a lifetime commitment.

Peoples lives changes. Families change. There are deaths, marriages, births, illnesses, retirements, financial challenges, life decisions to change jobs or move to another location, or just do something different with their lives. Forcing Landlords into a permanent, until death do us part rental lease, is not the answer to helping the Oregon Housing Situation.

Bills like SB 2484, which has not passed at this time, would require landlords to all childcare businesses on their properties without any consideration to the property itself is unfair and reckless. There are many liability issues, maintenance issues and zoning issues with this. We need to encourage investors to invest in Oregon, not sell their properties in Oregon and invest elsewhere.

We all need to work together to help Oregon Tenants that are struggling. Public assistance and public housing for those tenants is what is needed. That would help the small percentage of Tenants having difficulties without disrupting the entire Oregon Housing market.

Most tenants and landlords have great relationships, unless we get in their way with regulations. We need to help and protect the tenants that are having difficulties. We also need to protect landlords, especially those with fewer units. We just need to work harder to find solutions that do not make the situation worse for everyone.

Thank you for listening.

Richard Satter