

Submitter: Susannah Krug
On Behalf Of: Parents who rent their homes
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: SB611

Chair Fahey, Vice-Chairs Breese-Iverson and Kropf, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Susannah Krug and I write to you as a renter and a parent in North Plains, Oregon, asking for your support for SB 611B.

As an eligibility worker for social services, I witness the devastating effects of housing insecurity on a daily basis. The recent surge in rent increases across the state has pushed many families to the brink of homelessness. Even with my stable income and overtime work, I cannot afford a rent hike of 14.6%.

I am a mother of four and my family resides in a 2-bedroom house that is plagued with structural and mold issues. However, with the exorbitant rental prices, moving to a better place is beyond my reach. The fear of ending up on the streets due to an unaffordable rent increase is paralyzing. As a parent, I feel ashamed that I am unable to provide better for my children. It is heartbreaking when my child's doctor expresses concern about their allergies triggered by the environment. As a mother, I feel helpless as there is little I can do to alleviate their suffering permanently. When your child falls ill due to a hazardous home or homelessness, society doesn't blame the housing market; they blame you. It's a feeling of powerlessness in an unwinnable situation.

The issue of housing insecurity is one of the most critical challenges facing our communities today. Living on the streets or in a car makes it impossible to plan for the future. Although some people overcome these difficulties, most do not. We set them up to fail and then place the blame on them. This is a shameful way to operate our society.

We urgently need legislation that will keep families in their homes. The impact of exorbitant rent increases goes beyond material deprivation and inflicts long-term emotional damage on children and adults. Bills like SB 611 can directly improve the lives of parents like myself by making it possible to care for our children.

If you haven't met anyone who has experienced homelessness due to unaffordable rent, you don't know enough people. We are all human beings and our humanity should be acknowledged. It is time for our lawmakers to act and address the housing crisis. Families like mine need access to safe, affordable, and stable housing. Only then can we begin to create a better future for Oregon.

Thank you.