

Submitter: Kamelah Adams

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, Members of the Committee,

My name is Kamelah Adams and I live in Portland. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am a Black woman, a business owner, and a mom. I am a third-generation Portlander and I've lived in my neighborhood my entire life. I am also a renter and I support of SB 611.

This year, I received a 12% rent increase, which is about \$300 per month. This is over \$3,000 a year. To afford this, I'd have to make over \$35/hour and it would still be tight. I haven't received an eviction notice. I have not fallen behind. But like many people in our state, I do not have extra room in my budget to absorb this kind of increase.

All across Portland, I am seeing Black families being displaced further and further outside of the neighborhoods we grew up in, and it's only getting worse.

Communities, like mine, already facing historical and systemic barriers to jobs, housing, health care, opportunity and wealth are paying an unfair price for Oregon's inflated rent increases. My family deserves to stay in the community we call home. Black tenants in Oregon deserve to stay in our homes and our communities.

I used to be a housing and stability navigator and worked with people experiencing barriers to housing. Communities of color are suffering the greatest economic losses from the pandemic and are more likely to be unable to absorb massive rent increases. People are living on the edge and, if evicted, it's all too easy to fall into homelessness. Especially those of us with children, because if evicted, we'd have nowhere to go. Most shelters can't even accept women with more than two children. I believe that allowing rent increases up to 14.6% is an attack on working families.

We can't claim to be addressing homelessness if we're not passing commonsense laws that protect our communities from ballooning rent increases.

Sincerely,  
Kamelah, Portland