

Senate Housing Committee Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dan Mason, and I have worked in the rental housing industry for over 20 years. Please vote NO on SB611.

As a commissioner serving on the Oregon Government Ethics Commission, I respect the hard work of all public officials, especially ones serving in the Oregon legislature. It has been tough to watch the decision-making process by this body on housing priorities, and how some of the legislation passed into law has contributed to the loss of multifamily rental units.

The rent control measures that have taken place in the past, specifically SB608, have not helped renters; They have restricted more housing supply. Development for new units is down, single family housing rentals have been reduced by the thousands and sold to private owners, and people are fleeing Oregon at record numbers as occupancy levels in apartments are dropping. Renters have fewer choices than ever before, and this trend will continue with bills like SB611.

Consider this: the expenses related to operating multifamily properties have continued to increase. What happens in Salem has had a negative effect on renters at the base level as those expenses are passed on to the consumer, as they are in every industry in the United States. Utility prices, plumbing and electrical supplies, landscaping costs, labor to maintain on-site operations, and other basic expenses are going up. Your average renter in the Portland market is signing a 50 page lease agreement that complies with all the landlord-tenant regulations that come out of the legislature. That is not helpful to any renter going through the stress of moving and uncertainty currently happening in our state.

As a community manager of one of the largest multifamily properties in the Portland metro, I can share with you the challenges of operating during the pandemic and post-pandemic periods. Renters are stressed out, often taking out their stress on neighbors and staff of these properties. Harassment, verbal abuse, tenant on tenant violence, and other dramatic interactions take place at these communities daily. Problem-solving by legislators should be focused on these aspects of rental housing, not more burdensome regulations that make the already challenging atmosphere for housing providers even more difficult.

Thank you for your time.

Dan Mason

Hillsboro, Oregon