

Submitter: Aaron Douglas

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

Hello, I am Aaron Douglas, a seasoned rental housing industry professional from Portland, Oregon. After more than 17 years of working in this field, I strongly urge you to vote NO on SB 611, and let me tell you why.

Firstly, rent control has failed to address the issue of unaffordability in Portland, Oregon, and across the nation. Despite rent control being implemented in several cities, housing affordability has continued to deteriorate. In Oregon, the median rent has increased by 11% since 2017, with Portland being one of the most expensive cities to rent in the country. My math indicated that's just 11% divided by 5 years so the average increase per year is 2.2%. Therefore, rent control is unnecessary.

Additionally, SB 611 will only worsen the problem of housing instability, without tackling its root causes. It proposes to house Oregonians at the expense of rental providers, which is neither sustainable nor effective public policy. Instead, we should focus on long-term rent assistance programs and increasing the supply of affordable housing.

Moreover, if we want to achieve the goal of adding 36,000 new housing units per year, SB 611 is counterproductive. Expanding rent control will discourage new developments and deter ownership of rental units. It will take us further away from our housing goals, making it harder for Oregonians to stay in their own communities, for businesses to grow, and for local governments to have a solid tax base.

Rent prices are determined by various factors, including rising utility and insurance costs, inflation, increased cost of maintenance and payroll, and local tax burdens. Unfortunately, these costs continue to escalate, making it increasingly difficult for rental providers to maintain their properties and keep rents affordable.

In conclusion, I urge you to vote NO on SB 611. Instead, let's focus on long-term rent assistance programs and increasing the supply of affordable housing. Expanding rent control will only drive rental owners out of the market, hamper much-needed multifamily developments, and worsen the problem of housing instability in Oregon.

Thank you for considering my perspective.