

Submitter: Janette Tank

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

My wife and I had the undesirable opportunity to survive housing crises in 2 different states. We initially came to OR from UT. Within the last few years, UT was experiencing a massive boom in population, and a massive decrease in available housing due to the population explosion and massive uptick in rental properties being converted into AirBnBs.

Toward the end of our time there, I was commuting about 120 miles round trip to the only affordable apartment we could find to work at a pizza restaurant in a tourist town because it was the only job that would pay our bills.

Due to a domestic violence issue with a relative, we were forced to move. We did as much research as we could quickly. Everything we researched indicated that there was housing available in Bend that we could afford and it was listed as a great place to live.

Due to the emergency nature of our situation, we bought a 100-sq-ft travel trailer as quickly as we could and we literally fled UT. We came to Bend feeling as though we could land on our feet with the travel trailer, get established with jobs, and then work on locating housing.

Little did we realize, but this was the start of a great nightmare and before long, we would realize what a precarious situation we were in.

The rates were about \$675-750 for 6 months of the year. The rest of the year had to be booked far in advance and would cost up to \$2,000+ per month, just for parking.

We also discovered that there was not much safe RV parking outside of paid parks.

We also discovered that in spite of all advertising that we had seen to the contrary, there were basically no apartments available for rent.

We also have 2 medium dogs, and in spite of Bend's reputation for being one of the most dog-friendly cities in the country, there was almost no housing available that was dog-friendly.

When Covid happened, we were really out of luck. Bend became a hotspot for remote workers. The waiting lists for apartments bloomed to 60 people deep in certain cases. Prices shot up. There was even an apartment with reviews posted

showing black mold coming out of their sinks that had people crammed on their waiting list. People were also losing their homes as greedy landlords sold the buildings out from under them, leaving them with nowhere to go.

Things were so dire/cruel overall that in one case, Deschutes county showed up to a private property and demanded the removal of a blind woman who had been living peacefully on the property for 25 years. The owner had given her permission to live out the last of her days on that property. Her crime? She lived in a 5th wheel in their back yard. She had absolutely nowhere to go.

Every apartment was also charging application fees. We simply could not afford hundreds of dollars in application fees while paying up to \$2K for parking spaces. At one point, I only had \$5 to my name due to all of our expenses.

After 2 and a half years of housing instability, we decided to move to the Portland area. We were finally able to find housing ! Dog-friendly, too! And for less than we were paying for parking spaces !

But before we could move in, we endured a horrible test. With no parking or hotels available due to summer crowds, we were forced to live in a powerless RV for two weeks in a parking lot during the historic heat wave that killed so many in Oregon. I was terrified for our safety.

Thank God, we finally did make it home-sweet-home to a suitable apartment in Beaverton!

But now I worry every day about these rental increases. My wife and I make a combined \$12 more per hour than when we moved in, but a 14% rent increase would put us at \$420 more per month than when we moved in. With the rising cost of everything, we just can't keep up.

My wife and I have paved your parking lots with our tears, we have clawed our way back to living like humans, we have paid our dues, our taxes, our rents (ALWAYS on time) and we deserve to keep the raises that we earn.

Enough is enough.