

Submitter: Charlotte Blocker
On Behalf Of: Oregon renters displaced by 2023 rent increase
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: SB611

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

Since 2020, my husband and I have had to move a handful of times and, most recently, we left our home because of a 14.6% rental increase.

After the house we were renting was sold, we moved into a much smaller duplex. After a year, our rent was increased by 10%, the maximum at the time. The landlord didn't do basic maintenance; I went 10 months without a dryer and had to repair the toilet and oven myself, multiple times. I've never had so many appliances break. The rent was already \$1,900 and, at year two, we got a 14.6% increase. This increase pushed us out of our home—it wouldn't have been sustainable for us to stay knowing our landlord would give us as many increases as she could. To be honest, I think the increase was intended to push us out so the landlord could increase the rent even more.

I am a union organizer with SEIU and my husband is a high school teacher with a master's degree. We make good salaries and should be in a more comfortable situation than we are. And yet, I know it's even worse for other people in my community—I see people living in tents every day. It is unconscionable to force people out of our homes for no other reason than price gouging. When you're spending this much of your income on rent, a single vet bill or a broken car could derail your entire life. I've lived in Portland long enough to remember when it used to be affordable and have seen how bad things have gotten. I grew up in Oregon and I want to be able to stay here. We need protections in place that allow Oregonians to stay in our homes, and SB 611B is one important step forward.

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