

Submitter: Mande Campos
On Behalf Of: Tenants
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: SB611

Re: Support of SB 611 B

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Mande Campos, I work in providing housing and rental assistance services to young families. The majority of participants in our program are birthing parents, and about 60% of them are fleeing domestic violence, which is a notable financial burden on top of safety– this is in addition to experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

Participants who are able to obtain childcare, and then employment, are often working retail, warehouse, or what we most commonly see: caregiving positions. Professions like caregiving are emotionally and physically exhausting, yet pay so little and do not cover the needs of the family, much less their rent.

The properties I've encountered in my line of work are owned by large property management corporations which often means no onsite management, no onsite maintenance, and endless automated voicemail directories that make it unreasonably difficult to get in touch with landlords. They are slow to have compassion, and quick to give notices to their tenants. These are the types of properties that our participants qualify for because of their low income status and housing barriers.

When I heard that the rent increase could be as high as 14.6%, my heart sank, because these types of properties I have described have not hesitated in the past to raise rent prices to the highest extent they legally can. Cost of living goes up, wages stay stagnant, and the conditions of the properties do not improve with each rent increase. The most marginalized households in our communities are set up to fail in this current system. Not capping rent increases will move families, and children, into housing instability, homelessness, or back in abusive spaces– because they are just one paycheck and one rent increase away from losing everything.

I urge you to support this reasonable solution. Thank you