

Submitter: Georgeann Riley

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Oregon Senate Bill 611, which aims to cap rent increases, triple relocation assistance payments, and reduce the exemption for new construction. As we saw when rent control initially passed in 2019, this bill will ultimately do more harm than good to the state's housing situation forcing private landlords to be more aggressive with rent increases and ultimately guarantee that all tenants receive maximum rent increases every year.

Firstly, SB 611 disincentivizes the construction of more apartment units. With the state desperately needing more affordable housing, we should be encouraging developers to build more units. However, by capping rent increases and reducing the cap on new construction from 15 to three years, this bill reduces the incentive for developers to invest in new construction projects. With current costs to build and inclusionary zoning, it's already extremely difficult for developers to make projects pencil locally. This bill will lead to a reduction in the number of new units built, further exacerbating the state's housing crisis.

Secondly, older apartment buildings are a source of affordable housing, and this bill will harm them. These buildings often have lower rents, and many low-income residents rely on them for affordable housing. However, by restricting rents to such a low level, landlords of these properties may struggle to keep up with raising costs and maintain their buildings to a suitable standard. This could lead to lower quality of living for residents and make it difficult for landlords to bring their buildings up to code.

In conclusion, I urge you to reject Oregon Senate Bill 611. Instead, we should focus on encouraging the construction of more affordable housing units, supporting landlords to maintain and improve their properties, and providing long-term rent assistance to those in need. Let us work together to find sustainable solutions that benefit everyone in the state.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.