



The news that the annual rent increases would be 14.6% in 2023 sent shockwaves through Oregon, even as many tenants hoped landlords would never be so cruel as to invoke them. That hope has been quickly dashed as reports of extreme and predatory rent increase have been coming in from across the state. From tenant rights hotline calls and statewide eviction data, we know that tenants across the state are in crisis.

Many have received 14.6% increases. And based on our statewide survey and media reports, many are facing even higher increases because of the loophole that puts no limits on what landlords can charge in buildings newer than 15 years old:

- 15% for a family in Independence
- 20% for a tenant in Florence
- 30% for a tenant in Ontario
- 32% for a tenant in Sherwood
- 50% for an entire building in Portland

It is clear that many Oregonians—who already pay the ninth highest rent in the country—are one rent increase away from losing their homes. This crisis is playing out in eviction court, where there have been an average of 2,000 filings a month. More than 86% of filings are because people fell behind on their rent, and are now at risk of homelessness due to nonpayment. We also know those numbers are just the tip of the iceberg. An estimated five times as many people are displaced outside of the court process.

Where will all these newly displaced Oregonians go? Some will double up with friends, some may miraculously scrape up money for a new home... But inevitably, many will be forced to join Oregon's ranks of homelessness—at least for a time—seeking out an existence in their cars, in a shelter, or on the street.

Lawmakers did the right thing in passing SB 608 in 2019, which limited rent increases to 7 percent plus inflation, with an exemption for newer buildings. Now we know that we must do better. The bill didn't account for runaway inflation, and predatory rent increases on exempt buildings.

SB 611 is also important to protect taxpayer dollars. We strongly support increases in rent assistance funding this year but we must ensure that taxpayers aren't on the hook for rent gouging by landlords, no matter how old their buildings are. No matter how much new housing we build, if a landlord can force tenants out with predatory rent increases, our housing and homelessness crisis will continue to grow.

SB 611 would:

- Limit rent increases to 3% + inflation with maximum increase of 8% during a calendar year.
- Narrow the loophole, applying rent stabilization to buildings older than 3 years, which increases the number of people protected while exempting new construction.
- Increase relocation assistance to three-months' rent to help tenants displaced through no fault of their own avoid homelessness. Landlords with four units or less are exempt from this provision.
- Set no limits on rent resets between tenants.

Stable Homes for Oregon Families is a coalition of housing advocates, labor unions, education and health professionals, businesses, and citizens who believe in the stability of home. We are a diverse coalition of people and organizations that recognize Oregon's opportunity to help solve the housing crisis and secure our future.

And we are calling on the state legislature to pass SB 611.

