

Submitter: Elif Kimyacioglu

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

Dear Members of the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Elif Kimyacioglu. I work for Prime Residential who has owned apartments in Oregon for decades. Please vote NO on SB 611.

Strict rent control is not the answer to Oregon's housing problems and will only make housing even more unaffordable than it already is. Indeed, since rent control was implemented in 2019, rents have only gone up. And that is because Oregon has failed to address the most critical need in housing – which is to dramatically increase supply. There is no way that the state will achieve its goal of introducing 36,000 units per year with increased burdens on rents. It is already extremely costly to build housing in Oregon and this will only make matters worse because there will be no interest in spending such sums to build housing if those costs cannot be recouped. Increased rent control will create a vicious cycle of stagnating supply, driving up rents, and putting even more pressure on existing housing providers, forcing repeats of this cycle.

Strict rent control will have other negative effects. It will hinder capital expenditure and maintenance, critical needs for housing providers. That is because all other expenses, such as property taxes, insurance, utilities have all been increasing dramatically. Thus, in order to maintain positive cash flow (i.e., to avoid having less revenue than your costs), buyers and owners would have to reduce their capital spend – which would create a dangerous deferral of property maintenance.

Finally, it will also constrain the real estate market in general, making deals much less likely. The current interest rate market, in particular, makes it very difficult for it to make financial sense to buy new real estate, given that interest rates are exceeding any yield from rent. But with strict rent control, recouping your losses on high interest rates will be very challenging. Prime would seriously reconsider growing its portfolio in Oregon should strict rent control pass. And us and other buyers would certainly challenge their property tax assessments, as well – given that the regulatory landscape would have changed dramatically since we purchased our properties.

Ultimately, SB 611 is not the answer. Oregon needs to prioritize increasing supply for the long-term, but in the short-term, look to assist renters by greatly expanding rental assistance programs. The government has a role to play in the lack of supply, and has a role to play in assisting tenants while it tries to address the problem – not put the problem squarely on the shoulders of housing providers, who already take on

the very important role of housing Oregonians. VOTE NO ON SB 611.

Sincerely,

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