

Submitter: Brittany Barker

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

Dear Chair Jama, Vice Chair Anderson and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development,

I'm writing to ask that you prioritize the swift passage of Senate Bill 611.

My husband and I are currently homeowners but have rented for most of our adult lives. I remember being an adolescent in Oregon in the 1990s and NEVER seeing the abject poverty and houselessness that is so commonplace in the present day. While there are numerous factors contributing to this trend, the lack of affordable housing ranks front and center.

Everyone in Oregon deserves safe and stable housing but our high rental costs and housing inequities are forcing families out of their homes. While the Oregon housing market provides skyrocketing property wealth for landlords, renters have nothing to fall back on when their monthly costs rise beyond their paychecks. I recently learned that four in 10 Oregonians rent their homes and are already paying some of the highest rents in the nation. It's no wonder that tents are lining every major roadway and public area.

Very few people can afford a 14.6% housing cost increase. Getting an increase that high may as well be an eviction notice for Oregon renters.

SB 611 is a reasonable approach. Allowable annual rent increases for current tenants will be more predictable for current tenants and more homes will be protected. And between tenants, landlords can charge whatever the market will bear for vacant units.

SB 611 does not solve all the inequities in our housing market, but it is an important step to more fairness and is an essential element in the legislature's response to the state's housing and homelessness crisis.

Please vote yes on SB 611 to prevent more high-rent homelessness in our communities.

Sincerely,
Brittany Barker