

Submitter: Steve Ruttenburg

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

My name is Steve Ruttenburg and I live in Eugene, Oregon. I have worked in the rental housing industry for over 40 years. I am retired, and my rental business is my retirement fund.

I treat my tenants well. I do not increase rents every year. I do rent at market rate when I re-rent a vacancy. I find that it is most profitable to keep a tenant than it is to increase rents which results in turnovers.

I find that if I screen well, most tenants are good people. However, I have too much experience with applicants that lie to you, make up a sob story, anything to move into a unit. Once they move in, the real Jackal and Hide comes out. I am now renovating a unit that had brand new carpet and paint 7 months ago when a new tenant moved in. We had some complaints about barking dogs in his apartment. He is not approved for any pets. We inspected and the apartment smelled so bad, it made you gag. He had multiple dogs which he left in the unit all day and night. We did a no cause eviction, he left without a fight and I have spent over 7 Thousand dollars repairing it. Do you think I will ever see a dime of that money? After 40 years of doing this, I can tell you my chances are close to zero. This is not unusual, it has happened to me over and over again. The only thing unusual about this case is the tenant left without a fight. Normally we have to go to court to remove them. And by the way, in the 7 months he lived there, I collected about 7 Thousand dollars in rent, and I paid for water, taxes, insurance, and maintenance, so much for landlords making big bucks.

I do have empathy for those who need help. I am liberal minded and vote for liberal candidates. But the pendulum has swung too far to the left, things are getting out of hand. The state is trying to take over my rental business. I understand the need, I don't understand the method. Making it harder to evict a bad tenant is not the answer. Evicting a bad tenant does not change the homeless situation; it only replaces a bad tenant with a good one. The only way to fix the homeless problem is more housing. By the way, this will also fix the rent inflation problem. We now have too many people chasing too few rental units. This is simple economics 101.

In closing, I understand the real problem. Politicians do what is needed to get re-elected. Rental property owners make up a small percentage of voters. Tenants make up a huge percentage of voters. I am not stupid. It would be nice if politicians did the right thing, but I see the writing on the wall. Just so you know, several people have said that the rental pool will shrink if rent control and renters rights keep expanding. I am here to tell you it's true. I have sold 4 properties in the last 2 years and moved the money out of state. These properties are no longer rental properties. I intend to sell the rest and do the same with the money. I learned a long time ago, you can't fight city hall.

Signed: Fed up
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