

Submitter: Olivia Goodheart

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

As a lifelong resident of Lane County and a resource navigator for youth facing homelessness and other barriers, I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to pass SB 611. We are facing a profound housing crisis in our community. Rent prices are prohibitively high, as are move in costs such as first and last month's rent and security deposits. With COVID era benefits and protections disappearing, and cost of living expenses increasing (food, gas off and on), I have clients coming to me in a panic about how they will be able to move out of homelessness, or how they will be able to stay housed when rent hikes up. I see families doubled or tripled up, teenagers who are kicked out couch surfing because there is limited shelter space and long waitlists for transitional living programs, young adults staying in cars or sheds or garages just trying to survive. These are people in school and/or working, young people who are working so hard to overcome the barriers they have been dealt. They want to be able to be independent, to work and support themselves and pay their bills independently. Unfortunately the barriers around getting into and then keeping housing are egregiously high. Unstable housing and poverty are also contributing to the mental health crisis among young people. I wish I could say I could count on one hand how many times clients have had breakdowns in front of me over how desperate they are to find housing, but unfortunately it is too high to count. We need tenant focused solutions NOW and passing SB 611 is a place to start.