



**GATEWAY OFFICE  
& SERVICE CENTER**  
10550 NE Halsey Street  
Portland, OR 97220  
(503) 548-0200

**ROCKWOOD OFFICE  
& SERVICE CENTER**  
124 NE 181st Avenue  
Suite 109  
Gresham, OR 97230  
(503) 405-7875

[ourjustfuture.org](http://ourjustfuture.org)



March 27, 2023

Senate Committee on Housing and Development

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of SB 611. My name is Katia Selezneva and I am a community Organizer at Our Just Future.

On behalf of Our Just Future, please accept this testimony in strong support of HB 2001. We strongly urge you to pass SB 611 as a critical homelessness prevention strategy. Your support is critical in protecting seniors, families, individuals and communities across the state from extreme rent increases and displacement. We urge you to

In our home and the heart of our investments - East Portland/East Multnomah County, Oregon - Our Just Future counters the forces that keep people and communities in poverty by building relationships and assets that create opportunity – today and for future generations. We partner with people and communities impacted by poverty and homelessness so they can achieve long-term housing and economic security. We invest in affordable housing and community assets that contribute to strong, inclusive neighborhoods. And we advocate with our community for policies and investments that expand housing and economic opportunity, eliminate wealth inequality and end poverty.

SB 611 is an action that the legislature can take now to have an immediate impact on our state's housing crisis as we also work on the longer term solutions of increasing supply and providing support to rehouse our currently homeless neighbors.

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.

The rent increase reports from across Oregon show the great need for SB 611. Studies show that just a \$100 increase in median rents in a community is tied to a 9% increase in homelessness in that community. At a time when Oregon is

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experiencing some of the highest rates of homelessness in the nation, we cannot afford to let rent spikes go unchecked. A reasonable rent limit will help prevent high-rent home loss and prevent our state's homeless crisis from getting worse just as we are all pulling together to treat it as the emergency that it is. The legislature did the right thing in passing the first rent limit in 2019 but as we have all learned now, the limit did not account for runaway inflation.

Without SB 611 to stop runaway and extreme rent increases, we will continue to see people displaced onto the streets more quickly than we can rehouse people. Without passage of SB 611, Oregon's success in addressing the housing crisis is at grave risk.

Please pass SB 611 as soon as possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Katia Selezneva

Policy Advocate and Community Organizer