

Opposition Speech for Rent Cap Bill (HB 3054)

Hello everyone, my name is Jonathan Ayers, and I am the owner of the Pine Grove Trailer Corral, a 55 and over RV/mobile home park here in Oregon. Today, I stand in opposition to House Bill 3054, the proposed rent cap bill, and I want to share my perspective as someone who is deeply invested in this community and its well-being.

Many speakers in favor of this bill seem to assume that all mobile home parks are profitable enterprises that can raise rents indefinitely and absorb rising costs related to taxes, repairs, and upkeep. This view overlooks the realities faced by small park owners like myself. The complexities of managing a mobile home park—especially one as small and old as mine, with only 19 spaces—are often misunderstood.

Let me clarify. The idea that I can continuously increase rent without consequence ignores the fundamental principle of supply and demand. If my rents become too high, I risk having vacant spaces. Once those spaces are overpriced and tenants leave, I'll be left with fewer occupants and forced to lower rents to a sustainable level. This cycle is not only unsustainable but also does not promote stability for my tenants or my business.

Currently, the average rent for spaces at Pine Grove is approximately \$316. While this may sound manageable, the proposed rent cap would only allow for an increase of about \$9.16 per month, based on the Average Consumer Price Index (CPI) of 2.9% for 2024. This adds up to just under \$110 per tenant for the year. With only 12 tenants at the moment, this equates to an annual increase of around \$1,319.62. To put this into perspective, my payment on the park is more than double that amount per month. This minimal increase falls short of covering the rising maintenance costs needed to keep the park operational. Moreover, many systems in my park are nearing the end of their life and will require substantial upgrades. Whether it involves infrastructure, plumbing, or electrical systems, these essential updates demand significant financial investment, and a small increase in rent will not suffice.

This year alone, my park faced challenges when the city lost water supply, forcing me to provide temporary toilets and arrange for water delivery to my tenants. Additionally, I incurred a \$3,000 expense for a septic line repair. These unexpected costs have added further strain to my already tight budget.

We need to stop targeting small business owners, such as myself, in an attempt to fix the issues caused by a few bad actors. This broad-brush approach will not benefit either landlords or tenants. Instead, we should tackle these issues on a case-by-case basis, addressing the real problems without imposing undue strain on businesses that strive to provide safe and affordable housing.

If I find myself unable to maintain the park financially due to imposed rent caps, I risk closing my business. This would not only jeopardize my livelihood but also leave my loyal tenants—some of whom have called Pine Grove home for decades—without a place to live, resulting in homelessness for those who have been part of our community for so long.

In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider House Bill 3054 and its potential impact on small park owners like myself, as well as the vulnerable tenants who depend on us for housing. Let's work together to find solutions that support both tenants and landlords, ensuring we can maintain safe, affordable housing without sacrificing the viability of small businesses in our community. Thank you for your time.

Kind regards,

Jonathan Ayers