

Date: March 18th, 2025

To: Senate Committee on Housing and Development

From: Nick Keough, Political and Legislative Organizer, AFT-Oregon

Re: Support for SB 722

Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee:

AFT-Oregon is a federation of 27 local unions representing 18,000 education workers across early learning, K-12 classified, community colleges, and public universities. Today, our labor federation is writing to express our **enthusiastic support of SB 722, which will help prevent displacement and extreme rent spikes by extending coverage of Oregon’s rent stabilization statutes, and by prohibiting the use of price-fixing software to inflate rents.**

Oregon’s housing crisis has only worsened in recent years, and bold action is needed to prevent displacement and extreme rent hikes that push working people out of their homes. Oregon’s rent stabilization laws were put in place to protect renters from sudden and unreasonable increases, yet gaps in the law continue to leave too many at risk.

SB 722 strengthens these protections by:

1. **Reducing the new construction exemption from 15 years to 7 years.** While incentivizing new housing is important, allowing unrestricted rent hikes for 15 years has contributed to gentrification and displacement. A seven-year exemption strikes a more reasonable balance, ensuring new developments serve communities without driving long-term affordability issues.
2. **Banning price-fixing algorithmic software.** Corporate landlords have increasingly turned to AI-driven tools that artificially inflate rents by coordinating pricing across units, worsening the housing crisis. Oregon has already joined a federal lawsuit to combat this predatory practice – SB 722 would reinforce that effort by prohibiting its use statewide.

Our members see firsthand how the cost of housing impacts higher education professionals and students alike. The ability to afford rent should not be a barrier to teaching, learning, or contributing to Oregon’s workforce. SB 722 is a necessary step to keep housing affordable and

ensure that Oregonians are not priced out of their own communities.

We urge the committee to pass SB 722. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Signed,

AFT-Oregon – <https://www.aft-oregon.org/about-aft-oregon>