Hello,

My name is Emily Kerkstra and I own a small cafe in SE Portland. We are near St. Francis Church which offers support to houseless people. Because of our proximity to the church I've met quite a few people who have no homes. They live in tents or vehicles. so many of them are not the houseless you may imagine, people with addiction issues or mental health problems. These are people like me. Like my friends and family. Regular working people who LOST THEIR APARTMENTS. This is one reason that I want to urge you to support the fight against no cause evictions and to work toward rent stabilization laws becoming possible. These are good people who have no where to live because the market could bear higher rents and landlords have no reason not to take advantage of that. I am also a good hardworking person and I was forced to squat in the basement of my business for the first year and a half I was operating. This was because I simply could not find anywhere with affordable rent. I was lucky, I had a roof and heat and access to a bathroom. I work 40-50 hours a week and had no home. I know there are a lot of new buildings going up which offer housing, but these places charge such an insanely high rent that the only people who can afford them are professionals in high paying fields who I suspect have moved here from more expensive towns and so they don't balk at the rate. The average Portlander, food service worker, blue collar worker etc. would struggle to pay the rent at this new housing and the existing housing is becoming more and more expensive because it can. Do we want a town where only transplants can afford to live and everyone else has to move so far away that they have to travel over an hour to get in for their medium to low paying job? Who will wait our tables and serve our coffees? Or teach our kids for that matter.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read my email,

Please make a decision that will support the regular folks who need decent affordable places to live.

Emily Kerkstra