

Good afternoon Chairwoman Fagan, ladies and gentlemen of the senate housing committee.

My name is Anna-Marie Slate. I live in North Bend, and I am a community activist with CareWorks, which is a program of SEIU Local 503.

Three years ago, while living in Coos Bay, my landlord served me a no-cause eviction letter. As I scrambled to find another home, I instead found my own unit being advertised for \$100 more than what I had been paying: an increase of nearly 20%. In a small town with a very low vacancy rate, I didn't find another rental in the remaining time I had left in my apartment. My voucher with HUD also expired after the first three months of searching. So I ended up homeless.

It would take me two years after that to get myself off the street. I stayed with my mother and cared for her for a little bit of that time, before the state took control of her care and put her into an adult foster home in Portland. Then I was back on the street, in and out of the TAT House, a local shelter. Even when I could sleep there, I was still spending all day outdoors, regardless of the weather. When you're outside every day and most nights, you are sick and your body is sore most of the time. I applied for every housing opportunity that came available in my local area, and put my name on every single waiting list. The longer I was homeless, the worse my rental history appeared. Landlords are less likely to rent to you if there's a considerable gap in your rental history. It makes you look unstable and unreliable. And despite my eviction being no-cause, I think the eviction worked against me as well.

When I was finally called in for an interview to see a room for rent in the North Bend Hotel building, I told the property manager who called me that as long as she knew the toilet flushed, I would accept the unit sight unseen. This was a year ago. Even though I still qualify for rental assistance through HUD, I've had to wait for over two years since my last voucher expired, for a new voucher to be reissued to me. Up until this month, I have had to pay market-rate for my unit. And unless we make some changes in our law, I will remain at risk of the same disasters that led to my homelessness three years ago.

I'm asking you all to vote to protect me and other tenants from the rental increases and no-cause evictions that disrupt our lives and send us into traps of homelessness, poverty, and crisis.