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Opposition to Senate Bill 608

I oppose the elimination of No Cause Terminations that will occur if Senate Bill 608 is passed.

Enclosed are two items from The Oregonian.

The first article is about Greg Porter who hit three women with his car near Portland State University.

The article details problems two people had with Porter when he was their neighbor at an apartment complex. The article states that Mr. Porter and his wife were evicted from their apartment. The article does not state why they were evicted.

Nevertheless, this is the type of situation where a rental housing provider may need to use a No Cause Termination.

Yes, a For Cause Notice could be used but if Mr. Porter decided to fight the eviction, the testimony of the affected neighbors would be needed for the rental housing provider to prevail.

The second item is a commentary written by a property manager detailing why No Cause Terminations need to be retained.

I urge you to delete the provision in Senate Bill 608 that eliminates No Cause Terminations.



Joy Valine

Driver arrested after hit-and-run at PSU

Eder Campuzano
The Oregonian/OregonLive

Dawn Holbrook felt a twinge of familiarity Saturday morning as she read news reports that a man had sent three women to the hospital in an apparent hit-and-run on the Portland State University campus the previous day.

The retired counselor was talking about the story with her neighbor when the two came across the name of the man police arrested in connection with the incident.

"Is that Greg Porter from downstairs?" Holbrook said.

Until last year, the man accused of intentionally driving on the sidewalk near Southwest Sixth Avenue and Montgomery Street in downtown Portland shared a unit with his wife, Mary Porter, at the King City Apartments.

"I was not shocked at all," Holbrook, 69, said.

One of the victims remains in critical condition at OHSU Hospital, a spokesperson said Saturday morning. Another is in serious condition. And the third is in fair condition. They have not yet been identified by police. Porter faces accusations of attempted murder, first-degree assault, reckless driving and failure to perform the duties of a driver.

Greg Porter was prone to confrontation, Holbrook and another neighbor, Ralph Garza, said.

Holbrook's first interaction with Porter was nearly four years ago when she first moved into the unit above his. His home theater system was playing at full blast and the sound was shaking the floor of Holbrook's unit. She walked downstairs, rapped on the door and asked Porter to turn the volume down.

When he wouldn't relent, Holbrook called the build-



Greg Phillip Porter, 61, is being held at the Multnomah County jail.

ing manager. Porter would ultimately oblige but from then on, "I was the enemy," she said. In retaliation, Porter took to stomping up and down the stairs outside Holbrook's apartment to agitate her. He would also accuse Holbrook of stealing the password to his laptop and locking him out of it.

He lobbed a similar allegation at Garza, who lives in the unit to the right of Porter's former apartment. The two rarely spoke, but Porter would typically approach Garza when he was sorting through personal issues.

In April 2017, Porter told Garza he was afraid of being tossed out of his apartment. According to court records, Greg and Mary Porter were evicted from the King City Apartments one month later.

The neighbors suspect Greg Porter lived out of his car for the next month until Mary Porter, who had Parkinson's disease, was sent to the hospital for the last time. She died in May 2017, neighbors said.

His most recent listed address is Secora, a rehabilitation facility in Southeast Portland. James Aldred, an administrator at Secora, said Porter was a patient at the facility who moved out May 1 after finishing physical therapy. Aldred said the suspect suffered from delusions.

"It doesn't surprise me that he was involved in something," Aldred said, but that he wouldn't have expected "something to this degree."

Everton Bailey Jr. contributed to this report.

Opinion

IN MY OPINION

Tenant rights bill would protect harassers

The author says Senate Bill 608, while optimistically intended to protect Oregon's renters, will actually prevent property managers from protecting residents. *Elliot Njus, file*

Melodie Atkinson

Melodie Atkinson manages two large multifamily properties in Salem.

Today, more than 40 years after passage of the 1968 Fair Housing Act, harassment continues to degrade safe living environments for Oregonians.

I grew up in less than popular neighborhoods. I have seen neighborhood violence and felt the struggle to find "somewhere else" — suitable housing where we could sleep soundly at night. My single, working-poor grandmother raised me after I left the foster care system. She made too much for public assistance, but not near enough to raise a family. I recognize the hardships of housing barriers and have spent my career dedicated to helping people from all walks of life find safe and comfortable places to call home.

As a property manager, my guiding principle is to protect residents. The Fair Housing Act and other federal and state laws require me to maintain a harassment-free environment on my properties. But Senate Bill 608, while optimistically intended to protect Oregon's renters, will have the opposite effect.

A provision in the bill would ban "no-cause notices" after 12 months of tenancy. Such notices occur when a landlord alerts a tenant on a month-to-month lease that he or she must vacate a unit. Taking away landlords' ability to issue these no-cause notices removes a valuable tool for protecting other tenants from one who has been harassing them or engaging in behavior that falls short of a for-cause eviction. The bill essentially sanctions harassment and can create a hostile environment for the residents. Under current law, residents are better protected, and bad actors creating a hostile environment are given ample time to make alternative arrangements.

A no-cause notice also allows property managers to protect the privacy of victims and reduce the potential for retal-

iation. There is no worse injustice than seeking help and then being subjected to further mistreatment and intimidation. For-cause notices must detail the spiteful yet less than illegal behavior, silencing renters who may be fearful of coming forward. Bullying happens everywhere, and when the bully is your neighbor, there is no escape.

The expenses of moving to escape a malicious neighbor disproportionately hurt renters with lower incomes, those with disabilities, and especially those with children. The populations that lack the financial resources necessary to move are restricted and cannot rebound from the negative impact of a neighbor who perpetuates a harassing environment. Residents with limited resources will be held hostage in their own homes — unable to escape an environment that would otherwise be remedied.

Why are we rewarding harassment and intimidation? Why should a good neighbor be forced to move instead of a bad one? Why is my right to advocate for my residents being stripped away?

Disparate impact is the unintentional application of a facially neutral standard that disproportionately affects a specific group. The removal of no-cause notices as a tool to protect renters from hateful behavior will have dire consequences.

If the right to evict those who harm their neighbors is restricted, it will become much more difficult for Oregonians to protect residents from those who violate others' rights and inflict emotional and/or physical damage to people and property. My career in property management, connected to my life experience, provides me a unique perspective to Oregon's housing challenges. Restricting the right to protect tenants is not a real solution. I am urging lawmakers to hear the voices of people asking them to slow down when crafting these overhauling, dangerous regulations.