



February 18, 2019

Dear Members of the House Committee on Human Services and Housing,

On behalf of Causa Oregon, I urge support for SB 608. Causa is Oregon's Latino immigrant rights organization. Founded in 1995, we work to improve the lives of Latino immigrants and their families in Oregon through advocacy, coalition building, leadership development, and civic engagement.

SB 608 increases tenant protections against unjust evictions and economic displacement for 40% of Oregon households that rent their homes. Many farmworkers, immigrants and low-income Oregonians are impacted by unfair housing practices. Eliminating unjust evictions will ensure home stability. More importantly, it prevents landlord retaliation and discrimination when tenants report needed repairs to their landlord.

In addition, more tenant protections are necessary because Oregon is in a housing crisis. Homes across Oregon are experiencing extreme rent increases that are displacing people and their families in both urban and rural areas. Over the last two years, renters are forced to leave their homes resulting, in some cases, homelessness. I see this crisis everyday simply traveling to-and-from work. Oregon has the second highest percentage of unsheltered homelessness in the nation. People are being displaced because current tenant protections are at its lowest.

SB 608 ensure better tenant protections for all Oregonians. The bill has two key components that will help minimize Oregon's housing crisis.

1. It ends the unjust use of no-cause evictions, ensuring that tenants who follow the rules are not ripped from the homes unfairly.
2. It will curb the economic evictions happening throughout the state and help stabilize rents so that tenants can have economic stability.

Oregon communities are stronger when everyone has a safe, stable, and affordable place to live. Oregon's crisis is complex and will require dozens of solutions but protecting renters from displacement is the most critical.

Please support SB 608 by bringing fairness and stability to Oregon renters.

Sincerely,

Andrea Williams
Executive Director, Causa