

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
DEC. 11, 2024  
Bill LC 1860

Testimony from OSTA Vice President Rochelle Love Elder

Thank you for having me today. My name is Rochelle Love Elder, I serve as Vice President for the Oregon State Tenants Association, known as OSTA. We advocate for the approximately 60,000 manufactured and floating home park residents in our State most of whom are either low-income families or seniors living on a fixed income.

We have conducted a Statewide survey at the request of Representative Pam Marsh. The results are startling. Before I continue, I'd like to say, it is far easier to prevent a problem than it is to fix one. We ask for your consideration and support for Bill LC 1860 which will help avert a housing crisis for seniors and low-income families in every district, and will ensure fair resale values and market stability for manufactured and floating homes.

We are at a tipping point right now. Looking at the average social security retirement benefit and the average rent prices in parks, seniors are at this time paying 43% of their income toward rent. US Dept. of Housing and Urban development defines 50% of income spent on housing as severely cost-burdened.

Within just 10 short years, at the current 10% increase, rent will double. Consuming 75% of the average social security retirement benefit. Unless we take action now, we are guaranteed a future housing crisis for seniors living in parks and marinas.

By aligning the rent increase cap to the Consumer Price Index, we can stabilize housing now and far into the future, making bill LC1860 not just a band-aid, but a permanent solution to keeping 60,000+ Oregon residents in their homes.

In 2020 the largest group of park residents paid around \$400 per month. In 2024, the largest group of residents are paying around \$1,100 per month. Some paying as \$1,300 or more.

We understand the cost of running parks has increased right along with the cost of living. However, with such a sharp increase in revenue for parks, what we are not seeing is any significant improvements being made to park infrastructure and amenities.

Bill LC 1860 will not only lower the rent increases, but it is also calls for a stop to things that act as barriers to the sale of a home. Interior inspections requests have become common, as well as requests for aesthetic improvements to homes.

Park residents find themselves unable to sell their home, and unable to afford the rent, forcing many to sign over ownership to their park or sell at far less than market value. They lose the significant investment they have made in their home.

The recent rent increases are already causing a major hardship for park and marina residents. 83% struggle to pay their bills. 50% find it difficult to afford food. Over 40% say they will not be able to stay in their home due to rising rent costs.

Unless we take action now, we are guaranteed to be facing a major housing crisis for over 60,000 Oregonian park and marina residents. We urge you to consider Bill LC1860. Thank you again for your time, unless there are any questions, I will hand you over to our Board President Bill Bateman.