

Submitter: Jennifer Wittstruck
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: SB611

Chair Fahey, Vice-Chairs Breese-Iverson and Kropf, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 611B. My name is Jennifer and I am a renter living in Clackamas County. I am, also, a parent and grandparent of member's of the SE Portland community that live in rental housing.

Rental housing has become increasingly difficult to afford in the last 5 years, but in the last 2-3 years, I've become fearful that I or my family would end up homeless due to the dramatic rise in rent. It is difficult to afford my basic costs of day-to-day living without getting a second job, primarily due to rent increases, and this was becoming evident before we saw the inflation we are seeing now. I just turned 60 this year and for the first time in my life, I've lost hope of having safe, stable housing for myself. Many others, I personally know, are facing this frightening reality, too.

I strongly urge you to pass SB 611B as a critical homelessness prevention strategy for seniors, families, individuals and communities across the state suffering from rent spikes.

Senate Bill 611B provides some measure of rent stabilization for tenants and we need to keep building on the work done in 2019 and continue to tackle the destabilizing effects of rising housing costs in Oregon. Looking at the numbers, you can see how the lack of affordable, stable housing in Oregon comes at a very high price for us all.

Four in 10 Oregonians rent their homes and they pay the ninth highest rent in the nation.

Studies show that just a \$100 increase in median rents in a community is tied to a 9% increase in homelessness in that community. Extreme rent increases are happening across the state and the results are playing out in eviction court.

SB 611B is an action that the legislature can take now to have an immediate impact on our state's housing crisis as we also work on the longer term solutions of increasing affordable housing and providing support to rehouse our currently homeless neighbors.

Please pass SB 611B as soon as possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wittstruck