

Vote YES for SB611

I am writing to express my strong support for SB 611B and to urge you to pass this critical legislation. My name is **Rosalie Nowalk** and I am an individual residing in **West Linn**. I am deeply concerned about the escalating rent spikes that are negatively impacting individuals, families, and communities across our state.

I left my last apartment at a mega-complex (owned by an out-of-state investment company that controls much of the housing market) in Lake Oswego earlier this year mainly because they were making up for lost time during the pandemic by giving out alarmingly large rent increases (using a computer algorithm that doesn't take into account the human toll) and I knew it would not be sustainable for me. I didn't want to always be wondering throughout the year what the next increase would be and never feeling stable in my housing. **That's not good for one's health – mental or physical.**

I'm still recovering from the move. It gets harder and harder each time.

I will be 68 in November and was hoping to enjoy a few years of retirement before I die, but realize that's not likely if I have to come up with the extra money to pay the steep rent increases each year. So I keep working. I had hoped that by working past my full retirement age that I could save more for when I do finally get to take a break, but that pot of money now goes to the landlord instead.

You might say, "Well, just eat less!" – and I try to – or, "Turn the heat way down and save money that way!"

Yes, those are things one can do to save a tiny bit of money, but oftentimes, it's STILL not enough to keep up with the rent. Rent is not something you can "eat less of" or "turn down." It must be paid in its entirety each month or you get the added delight of paying a late fee or a possible eviction notice attached to your door.

Sometimes when I'm feeling masochistic, I open up Zillow or Redfin or Hot Pads and put in how much I can afford to pay for rent and then "click." When maybe one place comes up and it's far from my kids, I think that's it. Time to figure out how to put up a tent and find that sleeping bag I know I have stashed somewhere.

A fellow tenant when I lived at the mega-complex in Lake Oswego is considering a move to Mexico later this year because she feels that America is not a good place to grow old and still be able to live with dignity. She's 70 right now and is facing an over \$300/month rent increase in November of this year if she's slapped with a 14.6% rent increase. (In addition to having received an over \$150/month increase last year). She is still working, too, and gives much to her community.

I don't want to have to move, though. I want to stay near my daughter and her family, and my son. I fear I won't be able to once I finally stop working and have less income to pay the rent. I looked into possible rental assistance, but, apparently, any help with, say, a Housing Choice voucher is years and years into the future because there's too many people needing the same sort of help with maintaining their housing.

Please take decisive action by supporting SB 611B. Together, we can make a difference in ensuring affordable and stable housing for all Oregonians.

Thank you!

Sincerely,
Rosalie Nowalk