

June 20, 2023



Dear Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (OCADSV) is a non-profit, feminist organization that was founded in 1978. The member programs that serve survivors of domestic and sexual violence in communities across the state comprise the core of the Coalition. As the Executive Director of OCADSV, I am writing on behalf of this membership. *We strongly urge you to pass SB 611B.*

Across the state, short term shelter and long term housing is in short supply and renters are at risk of being displaced due to rent increases. That impacts survivors of sexual and domestic violence profoundly. Every day, our 54 member programs across the state (serving every Oregon County), work with survivors who are forced to rely on unsafe people to afford housing or are unable to leave dangerous home environments for fear of having nowhere to land but the street where they will be at higher risk of further victimization and contending with the elements.

Preserving housing stability is essential for all survivors of sexual and domestic violence in Oregon. It is well-documented that housing instability and homelessness increases the risk of experiencing violence and abuse. Survivors who are trying to maintain safety for themselves and their families are often rent-burdened, and one unreasonable rent increase can cause possible homelessness, and vulnerability to abuse.

Senate Bill 611B provides reasonable and necessary rent stabilization for tenants, while protecting landlords' and developers' ability to maintain a reasonable profit. Lawmakers did the right thing passing SB 608 in 2019. But we are now facing extreme inflation and without SB 611B, the 2023 rate increase is an unreasonable 14.6%. Tens of thousands of renters are at risk of displacement due to these extreme rent increases. The risk that this poses to survivors and their children is immense. Studies show that just a \$100 increase in median rents in a community is tied to a 9% increase in homelessness in that community.

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 supply and providing support to rehouse our currently homeless neighbors.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Vanessa Timmons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "V" and a long, sweeping underline.

Vanessa Timmons
Executive Director
Oregon Coalition against Domestic and Sexual Assault