

February 13, 2023

Chair Jamma, C-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Heather Shulmire and I am a family support interpreter at Head Start of Lane County. I write to you in support of SB 611, which addresses the critical need for rental stability in our state.

I am proud to be in support of the bill. This proposal will provide much-needed relief to renters who are struggling to make ends meet in the face of rising rents and limited resources. It will limit annual rent increases to 3% plus CPI or 8% whichever is lower, provide protections for all buildings over than three years old, and increase relocation assistance in no-fault evictions.

I personally know how difficult it can be to face rent increases, especially when it means having to choose between paying the bills or putting food on the table. I have been at my current place for 10 years and get a rent increase like clockwork. Even at 10% my rent increases have made my housing unaffordable. 10% of \$1300 is \$130 which is going to come out of my food budget when I get my next increase. I am barely making ends meet and every rent increase is putting me closer and closer to those ends not meeting. I do not live in a nice house or even a nice area of town and if the rent increases keep continuing at this rate, I will be priced out of my home within the next 2 years. I do not qualify for food stamps but I have begun to need food boxes to supplement my food supply due to the fact that my rent increases at a much faster rate than my income. I don't consider myself to be low income so I can't even imagine how all of the families that make minimum wages feel. The burden of housing insecurity is not limited to just myself; it affects families, seniors and low-income renters throughout our state. We must act now to ensure that our communities have access to safe, stable, and affordable housing.

In conclusion, I urge our legislators to support SB611, which will provide much needed relief across our state. Housing is a human right, and it is our responsibility to ensure that all Oregonians have access to safe, stable, and affordable housing. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Heather Shulmire