

February 10, 2023

Chair Jama, Vice Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Melissa Markell. I am a retail buyer/merchandiser for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. I write to you in support of SB 611, which addresses the critical need for rental stability in our state. 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 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 live in a manufactured home park in Phoenix Oregon. This is a very lovely well-maintained park, not only by the groundskeeper but by the occupants. We all make it a priority to keep our homes and the owners land in good condition. Our rents get raised very year to highest percentage, for the most part. Many occupants are living solely on Social Security and as time goes on these rents will only increase. Social Security does not keep up with these increases.

I am frightened to think how expensive the rent will be as I get older and have less income from working. 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 SB 611, which will provide much-needed relief to renters 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,

Melissa Markell