

February 21, 2023

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

My name is Shawn Winter and I write to you in support of SB611 which addresses the critical need for rental stability in our state.

I am proud to be a small business owner, in support of this 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 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 lived check to check for many years while establishing my business, rarely being able to plan more than a few weeks ahead. The only thing that kept me in business is that rents were so much lower when I was starting out. A decade ago, I moved from California to Oregon specifically to start my business, and largely because I couldn't afford rents in California. If I were starting the business today, I don't know where I'd go, but I don't think that Oregon would be the easy choice that it was for me back then. 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.

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,

Shawn Winter