

Submitter: Kamelah Adams

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB799

Subject: Vote Yes on SB 799

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, Members of the Committee,

My name is Kamelah Adams and I live in Portland. I am a Black woman, a business owner, and a mom. I am a third-generation Portlander and I've lived in my neighborhood my entire life. I am also a renter. I am testifying in support of SB 799 because I believe, as I hope you all do, that evictions should be rare and when they do happen, they should be fair.

For me, it was important for me to live in inner/NE Portland where I grew up. I've been here all my life. A lot of people of color have been displaced to where there is lack of sidewalks and lack of trees. But I have been trying to hold on here, but I just got a 12% rent increase, which is about \$300 a month.

I haven't received an eviction notice. I have not fallen behind. But like many people in our state, I do not have extra room in my budget to absorb this kind of increase. If I were to ever get into a tight spot, I can tell you that 72 hours is not enough time for anyone to make things right. SB 799 proposes giving people 10 days to find rent assistance. That is fair. That is reasonable. The impact of accelerated evictions is disproportionate. All across Portland, I am seeing Black families being displaced further and further outside of the neighborhoods we grew up in, and it's only getting worse. According to ACLU data, landlords filed evictions against Black women renters at double the rate of (or higher) than their white renters in Oregon, and 16 other states. Communities, like mine, already facing historical and systemic barriers to jobs, housing, health care, opportunity and wealth are paying an unfair price for Oregon's unfair and rushed eviction laws. My family deserves to stay in the community we call home. Black tenants in Oregon deserve to stay in our homes and our communities.

I used to be a housing and stability navigator and worked with people experiencing barriers to housing. Families need more time in order to access assistance that could prevent another family from being on the streets. Especially those of us with children, because if evicted, we'd have nowhere to go. Most shelters can't even accept women with more than two children.

We can't claim to be addressing homelessness if we're not passing commonsense laws that protect our communities from ballooning rent increases and accelerated

evictions. We have to pass the protections included in the Homelessness Prevention Package—rent assistance and a limitation to rent increases—that actually prevent people from being evicted in the first place and don't force our neighbors into homelessness.

Kamelah
Portland, OR