

Submitter: Thuy Phan

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB799

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Thuy Phan and I live in Portland. I am a tenants advocate here to testify in favor of SB 799 because evictions must be rare and they must be fair. Too many people I've worked with are at risk for homelessness if you do not pass this commonsense bill, as well as the rest of the Homelessness Prevention Package to increase rent assistance, limit rate increases, and increase the data available about Oregon's rental market.

I work on the Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT) renters' rights hotline and also serve immigrant/refugee community through referral from partner organizations Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon and Immigrant (APANO) and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO). Since the end of 2022, I got a lot of calls of tenants who are facing non-payment evictions and rent increase. What I can do for them is tell them what the law is and suggest next steps. However, in many cases I feel helpless because what they need is be able to stay in their home which I can't help. I've texting 211 and calling around to find out what organizations that have rental assistance available but no luck. Many of tenants I've worked with have a lot of barriers such as language, disability and they don't have anywhere to go. It's hurt to hear them crying on the phone and know that there is nothing I can do for them other than telling them the eviction process that would happen so that they would be on the street in 2 weeks if they can't pay. I've worked at CAT almost 6 years and I love the work that I am doing but these kind of phone calls is something that I never get used to. YOU are people in power and you can change this. YOU can make it happen. YOU can pass this bill and keep them home so they won't be homeless so please do the right thing.

Thank you again for hearing this important bill and allowing us to speak. I hope you will listen to people like me and vote yes on SB 799 and the Homelessness Prevention Package.