

Submitter: Kamelah Adams

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB2001

My name is Kamelah Adams and I'm a renter in Portland. I am testifying in support of HB 2001.

HB 2001 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 like me 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