

Submitter: Patrick Lakeman

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

Dear Chair Jama, Vice Chair Anderson and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development,

I urge swift passage of SB 611. Four in 10 Oregonians rent their homes and are already paying some of the highest rents in the nation.

Keeping rent reasonable impacts me personally. As a full time grad student with the children I have to work almost full time on top of my student loans just to have a small place to live within the city. I work in homeless ministry but the income this provides barely enables me to afford providing this crucial service to thousands on the street across the city. Even with my education and community support I am barely able to do this work and live within a reasonable distance to work. My family does not have the privilege to move outside of the Portland area so serious measures to restrain the rise in rent is ultimately the only way we will be able to afford staying here and doing homeless work.

Everyone in Oregon deserves safe and stable housing but our high rental costs and housing inequities are forcing families out of their homes. While the Oregon housing market provides skyrocketing property wealth for landlords, renters have nothing to fall back on when their monthly costs rise beyond their paychecks.

Very few people can afford a 14.6% housing cost increase. Getting an increase that high may as well be an eviction notice for Oregon renters.

SB 611 is a reasonable approach. Allowable annual rent increases for current tenants will be more predictable for current tenants and more homes will be protected. And between tenants, landlords can charge whatever the market will bear for vacant units.

SB 611 does not solve all the inequities in our housing market, but it is an important step to more fairness and is an essential element in the legislature's response to the state's housing and homelessness crisis.

Please vote yes on SB 611 to prevent more high-rent homelessness in our communities.

Sincerely,
Patrick Lakeman