

Dear Chair Jama, Vice Chair Anderson, and members of the Housing Committee,

My name is Matt Snell, I'm a resident of outer SE Portland, and I'm urging your support of Senate Bill 611. My spouse and I moved here from Nebraska last summer, and were shocked at the prices – before even getting here, I called more than 200 properties before landing on one that had something we could afford and would accept our three pets - one of which is a service animal. That property, and its management ended up being a nightmare with out of control black mold.

Luckily, we found this property owned by a small local company in outer SE Portland and were able to relocate with all of our pets. That said, as a married couple, both of whom are degreed and working in mental health, if we had a rent hike of even 10% we would likely be priced out of this state. Even now, we have to be very frugal to survive.

Ironically, with the work we do, we get a closeup view of people who have been victims of these rent hikes and forced into homelessness regularly. We are in a homelessness state of emergency. These outrageous legal rent hikes are one of the strongest structural tools to force people into homelessness. If you give landlords the tools to make more money, they will do it - but it's not just.

If we want to prevent high-rent homelessness, we must keep rents reasonable for all Oregonians, and make sure they are on track with working peoples' costs of living. Pass Senate Bill 611.

Thank you,
Matt Snell