

Submitter: Sara Stewart

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

I am a 42-year-old disabled woman. Because my disability started early in life, I don't have work credits, so I live off of SSI, which is less than 1000 a month. When I first got divorced, I was homeless for three months. Then all I was able to afford was a room to rent. I was blessed enough to get private rental assistance and now HUD, and I now rent my own apartment.

But my landlord has raised my rent by over ninety dollars this year after raising it sixty during the pandemic. That is for a one-bedroom apartment. I know for a fact this has seriously hurt others in my apartment complex. Even though I receive income-percentage-based rental assistance, that kind of raise still increases my rent substantially. I can't even imagine how it is for a family living off of minimum wage jobs, unemployed, disabled people who have not yet been able to access assistance, or elderly living off of a fixed income.

Food prices are skyrocketing, and gas prices are ridiculously high. People are having trouble meeting the essentials in almost every area of life. Predatory rent increases only increase the already-heavy burden on working families and those who are in most need of protection. Senate Bill 611 will protect the most vulnerable members in our state.

No one should have to be homeless. No one should have to resort to unsafe living conditions because that is all they can afford. Those are two outcomes that are very likely to increase if some sort of measure is not taken. Please vote yes on Senate Bill 611.