

Submitter: Andrew Becker

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

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

My name is Andrew Becker, and I am a tenant in the Eugene portion of State House District 8. People who are blindly pro-landlord tell me that my rent — and my rent increases — help pay for property taxes and maintenance of my dwelling. However, in Oregon, property taxes cannot go up by more than 3% per year, while my rent went up by the statutory maximum this year. Any time I have ever had a maintenance issue, the property management company has always sent me the full bill of the cost. That includes one call for a broken doorknob to my front door, one call for a shower drain that started overflowing when I flushed the toilet, and one call for the pull-string to the kitchen light fixture falling off. I also have no heating in my apartment except for a baseboard in my bedroom on the 2nd story, as all of the other ones in the house do not work. The property management company says that it's not their responsibility to ensure that the other 7 rooms can be heated.

If my rent increases are covering property taxes and maintenance, I wish somebody would tell my property maintenance company that...because as far as I can see, they've never done a single thing for me. Except for threatening to evict me for having my boyfriend over when someone from their company came over for the annual inspection this January without posting notice beforehand (later that day, our neighbors in the B unit in the alley behind my house dropped off a letter of notice for the inspection that they saw posted to their front door when returning from work — not earlier that day when they left for work, nor was it there the day before when they came home from work). The property management company said that having my boyfriend there was strike one towards a for-cause eviction upon getting a third strike, and gave me a cure date by which to ensure that my boyfriend was not on the premises 7 days or more in a row. Despite my protestations that he wasn't at my place for more than the time per week allowed in the lease, the day before that cure date, they taped a second notice for that same cause...but this time, they seemed to know which door was actually mine. Call me paranoid, but based on how much they hiked the rent for the B unit last time somebody moved out and a new tenant moved in, I have a sneaking suspicion my landlord would rather find a reason to get me out and jack up the rent even more than the maximum allowed by law if I stay. (So that they can continue to do nothing while making even more money than before.)

I suppose it's too late to make a long story short, but you get the idea. I don't care if some landlords say they're good apples. We don't have laws because some people

are good apples. We have them because not everybody is, and in this area, we have too few laws protecting renters from all the bad apples. It's as simple as that. Homeowners and landlords are protected with a 3% cap on property tax increases. My property management companies will not perform an additional (14.6%-3%) 11.6% of my rent's worth in maintenance to my unit this year. They're just collecting a few extra thousand dollars from me this coming year in pure profit, for no good reason — and despite whatever sob stories the landlords might tell you, nobody ever went broke from being paid to do nothing, and they won't go broke for getting paid a slightly smaller increase next year for still doing nothing. It's time to cut out this malarkey. Please support common sense: please support SB 611.

Humbly yours,

Andrew S. Becker