



## Oregon moms and caregivers fighting for gender, economic, and racial justice.

To: Senate Committee on Housing and Development  
From: Family Forward Oregon  
Date: March 27, 2023  
RE: In Support of SB 611

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the Committee,

Family Forward Oregon is committed to advancing policies that support families and help them succeed, both in the workplace and at home. We work to ensure that Oregon is a place where all families can be economically secure and have the time they need to take care of each other. We believe having a safe and stable home is a critical component to every family's success – it impacts a family's safety and security, their childrens' educational outcomes, and contributes to economic stability for the entire family. That is why we strongly support SB 611 which will prevent high-rent home loss and prevent our state's homeless crisis from getting worse.

When people have to vacate due to no fault of their own, Oregon's tight and expensive rental market makes it hard to quickly find a new home. The rent increase reports from across Oregon show the great need for SB 611. Studies show that just a \$100 increase in median rents in a community is tied to a 9% increase in homelessness in that community.

Multiple studies show that the housing crisis affects Black, Indigenous, and other people of color significantly– especially those who identify as women. The National Low Income Housing Coalition's annual report from 2022 found that the gap between wages and housing costs continues to be the largest for people of color, and particularly women of color<sup>1</sup>. Among renters, 55% of Black households are cost-burdened and 53% of Latino households are cost-burdened, compared to 43% of white households. The disparities grow even starker for women of color: more than 70% of Black and Latina women earn an hourly wage that falls short of the one-bedroom Housing Wage.

Without protections built into our laws, the cycle of housing instability will continue. SB 611 would:

- Limit rent increases to 3% + inflation with maximum increase of 8% during a calendar year.
- Narrow the loophole, applying rent stabilization to buildings older than 3 years, which increases the number of people protected while exempting new construction.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://nlihc.org/news/nlihc-releases-out-reach-2022-high-cost-housing-0>

- Increase relocation assistance to three-months' rent to help tenants displaced through no fault of their own avoid homelessness. Landlords with four units or less are exempt from this provision.
- Set no limits on rent resets between tenants.

We believe that SB 611 is a reasonable proposal that prevents rent spikes and displacements. It will also allow landlords to take inflation into account and preserve the ability to reset rents to market rates in between tenancies. Without your support of SB 611, Oregon's success in addressing the housing crisis is at grave risk. We strongly urge the passage of SB 611 as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Lisa Kwon  
Policy Manager  
Family Forward Oregon

