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On Behalf Of: Renters
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure: SB611

My experience as a renter in Salem since 1999 has been a mixed experience. The landlord/renter relationship here is very uneven. This is not a meeting of mutual respect; it's as if you're on the school playground alone with a bully.

My first residence in Salem was a major step up from where we'd lived in central New York State. I was really pleased to be in a mold-free apartment, with a stated serious commitment to a healthy site. While it's an older complex, it was very attractive, nice and well designed space. The people in the office were helpful and pleasant. The location was good.

When moving to another apartment complex, it became clear I was at the mercy of the invisible landlord. A company (which seems to have several offshoots) based in Eugene had ultimate authority. They weren't nice like the local manager and staff.

Apparently, it was routine to charge repeatedly -- tenant to tenant -- for the same issue. Over six years we lost six sets of good neighbors by an ongoing problem with creeping water damage in their kitchen floor. The problem was never fixed. It was easier and cheaper to get new tenants annually in that particular unit. I'm sure the tenants didn't receive any assistance for relocation, nor a positive reference.

Not to ignore the real problem: As a senior living on Social Security (and formerly SNAP), I'm really alarmed about the rent increase we received for 2023. Starting in October 2019, we paid \$750 in rent for a one-bedroom apartment. It's now up to \$875, with this year's raise the highest. Another raise and we'll be priced out of this very modest housing.

Where do we go then?

I strongly support SB611.

D. Joan Lockwood