

Submitter: Alexander Rhodes

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of SB 611. My name is Alexander Rhodes and I am on the Board of Directors of the Community Alliance of Tenants.

We strongly urge you to pass SB 611 as a critical homelessness prevention strategy, to protect seniors, families, individuals and communities across the state from extreme rent increases and displacement.

As a Policy Committee member with Community Alliance of Tenants I've heard firsthand from individuals that rent increases has had a negative impact. There is a resounding sentiment that enough is enough. No more raises while development companies just enlarge their profit. Additionally, as an environmental educator who works with marginalized youth, making sure that families with children have stable housing is key for a whole host of developmental outcomes. Especially as we live in a time with elevated traumas, making sure the home is a healing space starts with making sure there isn't financial pressures weighing on the breadwinners of the family's mental health. Why add another barrier to achieving peace, security, and a healthy mind. Ultimately, this could lead to an entire family losing their housing

To put the problem in perspective, four in 10 Oregonians rent their homes and they already pay the ninth highest rent in the nation. The statewide stories of massive rent increases in communities large and small show that we have a rent crisis that must be addressed. Whether these increases are hitting entire buildings or mobile home parks or individuals, each and every one puts people at risk of displacement and homelessness.

SB 611 is an action that the legislature can take now to have an immediate impact on our state's housing crisis.

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.
- 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.

Without SB 611 to stop runaway and extreme rent increases, we will continue to see people displaced onto the streets more quickly than we can rehouse people. Without passage of SB 611, Oregon's success in addressing the housing crisis is at grave risk.

Please pass SB 611 as soon as possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Alexander Rhodes