



April 8, 2023

Dear Co-Chair Steiner, Co-Chair Sanchez, Vice-Chairs Girod, Gomberg, and Smith, and members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee,

The Community Alliance of Tenants supports the Fair Shot for All's [People's Budget](#)—a clear set of policies and investments that will lift up our communities and strengthen the state by using a racial, gender, and economic justice framework.

The Community Alliance of Tenants is a membership-based statewide association of tenants that represents thousands of tenants throughout Oregon. We educate and empower tenants to demand safe, stable, and affordable rental homes. We believe that housing is the basis of a strong community. So we bring tenants together to organize and collectively advocate for fair and equal protections in housing practices and policies. Our state will be healthier, stronger, and more resilient when everyone has what they need to thrive.

The People's Budget includes smart, community-led policies, investments, and workforce supports to address systemic inequities in Oregon, including the Fair Shot Agenda:

- Indigenous Language Justice—SB 612, SB 911
- Reproductive Health and Access to Care—HB 2002
- Stable Homes Homelessness Prevention Package—HB 5511, HB 2001, SB 611A
- In Defense of Humanity—SB 413, SB 817

As the Director of the Community Alliance of Tenants on behalf of our members and the board, I also urge you to support investments in HB 5511 to provide an additional \$100 million in rent assistance.

Oregon is in a high-rent emergency. Evictions have skyrocketed and most of them are because people have fallen behind in their rent. Additional rent assistance is a smart investment - combined with SB 611A. Too many Oregonians are one high medical bill or unexpected cut in work hours from facing eviction and HB 5511 will help them stay in their home until they get back on their feet.

SB 611A is also essential to ensure that rent increases are reasonable so that taxpayer dollars aren't spent to cover extreme and unnecessary rent increases.

At the Community Alliance of Tenants, we hear from people everyday struggling to stay in their community because the rent is too high. Let's learn from the lessons of the pandemic when as a state we were largely able to stabilize communities with relatively small amounts of rental assistance. The rewards for communities when people are stably housed are huge, students stay in their schools, families keep appointments with medical providers, and homelessness is prevented. When rents increase unreasonably we see the consequences in Oregon's high rate of homelessness. Remember that there are no limits at all on rent increases in buildings 15 years or newer. Reports of extreme increases such as 32%, 47%, 50% are becoming more common. These rent increases amount to thousands of dollars of extra in household rent each year while incomes are not increasing at this rate. These



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increases are the functional equivalent of an eviction. 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.

We are asking you to support the Governor's strategic decision to use all available current resources to invest in these key priorities. Oregon's reserves are already healthy and strong. Rather than saving more for a future Rainy Day, we need to make investments now. We create widespread economic opportunity for all when we invest in access to food, housing, and health care for our communities, and strengthen our workforce through fair wages, benefits, and protections.

I urge you to support the policies and investments in the People's Budget and the Fair Shot Agenda.

Sincerely,
Kim McCarty

Kim McCarty
Executive Director
Community Alliance of Tenants