

Submitter: Jeffrey Bennett
On Behalf Of: Self
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3054

Dear Legislators,

I oppose HB 3054.

As a housing provider, I sold the vast majority of my Oregon investments and reinvested in housing provider friendly regions in direct response to the legislative attack on my livelihood. With expenses skyrocketing (taxes, electricians, plumbers, materials...), the cavalcade of new Oregon landlord/tenant laws created too much work and too much risk to make my endeavors worthwhile. Simply complying with the weight of the regulations (more paperwork, more time...) made the endeavor untenable. Alas, those legislatively-created problems don't exist in the regions wherein I now provide housing.

As an attorney, I've watched the exodus of landlords from Oregon as many are my clients. You wore them out. They got tired of your new laws. They went elsewhere.

Providing housing is a business. And... it's an expensive business. A housing provider is subject to the same inflationary pressures endured by egg buyers. When the cost of providing housing runs into a rent increase limit that's wholly detached from economic reason and fiscal reality, profits (you know.. the money left at the end of the day that housing providers use to buy their own eggs) migrate toward zero. Zero profit leads to zero incentive to provide housing. Zero incentive to provide housing leads to fewer housing providers, investors, developers, and so on.

Governor Kotek has proclaimed her desire to create more housing and increase affordability. Your laws are targeting the exact opposite objective: You're chasing away housing providers and developers and undermining the very goal Governor Kotek states she's pursuing. Fewer housing providers and developers creates fewer housing opportunities. Supply and demand (you know... simple economics) then kicks in and the cost of housing goes up.

I could wax eloquent about how the cavalcade of new laws and your proposed HB 3054 hurt good tenants, protect bad tenants, and chase away housing providers. But I'd bet (a) you already know that, and (b) you're adept at politicizing landlord/tenant issues in a wholly deceptive manner. I can't tell whether those deceptions arise from delusion or ambition, but you know as well as I do that the new laws are bad for... tenants. Yes... tenants.

As a housing provider and attorney I'm a strong proponent of great landlord/tenant relationships. Bad landlords should suffer the consequences of their actions. Bad tenants should be easily removed from the premises so that housing providers don't go broke and neighboring tenants aren't negatively affected both directly and indirectly. Still, you're protecting bad tenants at everyone's expense. You're creating and proposing laws wholly detached from reality. Enacting bad laws exacerbates the bad legislative policies that have created the bad place you say we're all now in. The only "bad" thing that lies at the core of the problems are the laws you've created and the bill now before the house (HB 3054). If you pass that law, you're going to make the legislatively-caused bad situation... worse.

I've said "told you so" after the last half-dozen legislative sessions. It'd be delightful to avoid repeating that phrase after the current session.

Vote "no" on HB 3054

Respectfully, Jeff Bennett