

TO: House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
FROM: Loren Naldoza
RE: Opposition to HB 2305
DATE: February 18, 2025



Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Andersen, Vice-Chair Breese-Iverson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share our opposition to HB 2305, which would put many Oregon tenants at risk of eviction, homelessness, and further food insecurity.

Oregon Food Bank’s mission is “to eliminate hunger and its root causes *because no one should be hungry.*” Unfortunately, one third more Oregonians experience hunger today than before the pandemic. Last year, we saw 2.5 million visits to our network of over 1,200 food assistance sites through the Oregon Food Bank Network—a 31 percent increase from the previous year.

As part of the State’s work to end food insecurity, it must also address one of its largest underlying causes: housing instability and the cost of living. Everyone deserves a safe place to call home—and no one should have to choose between buying food and paying for housing. Yet Oregonians who are renters are six times more likely to experience food insecurity than homeowners.¹

The lack of safe, stable, and affordable housing remains one of the leading drivers of hunger and poverty throughout our state. Roughly 138,000 renter households in Oregon (or 22 percent) have extremely low incomes, with a household total income at or below the federal poverty line, or 30 percent of their area median income (AMI).² Oregon also has a shortage of over 100,000 rental homes that are affordable and available for households with extremely low incomes. Specifically, the annual household income needed to afford a two-bedroom rental home is roughly \$62,000.³ These housing and cost-of-living crises often impact various populations in disproportionate ways. For example, in the 2022–23 school year, an estimated 21,478 children enrolled in Oregon’s school districts—approximately 3.9 percent of all students in the state—experienced homelessness.⁴

¹ Mark Edwards, Food Insecurity in Oregon: Considering the Role of Housing, Oregon State University, Oct. 2016. <https://agsci.oregonstate.edu/sites/agscid7/files/oregonhungerreportoctober2016.pdf>.

² National Low Income Housing Coalition, “Housing Needs by State, Oregon,” <https://nlihc.org/housing-needs-by-state/oregon>.

³ *Id.*

⁴ Greene, J. et al., “2023 Oregon Statewide Homelessness Estimates,” Portland State University Homelessness Research & Action Collaborative (Jan. 2024) at 4. See also SchoolHouse Connection, “Infant & Toddler Homelessness Across 50 States: 2021–2022” (Mar. 20, 2024), <https://schoolhouseconnection.org/infant-and-toddler-homelessness> (estimated total population of Oregon children aged 0–3 experiencing homelessness is 5,392, or 3.31 percent of all infants and toddlers).

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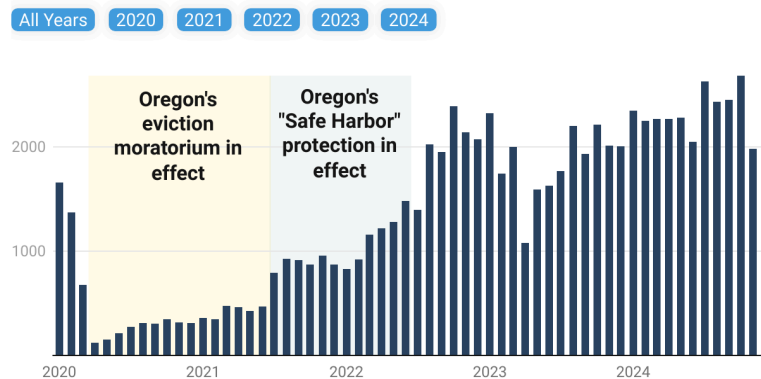
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Because many low-income tenants are facing extremely difficult economic pressures from our concurrent housing and cost-of-living crises, Oregon Food Bank is deeply concerned that HB 2305 would make the prevalence of housing instability in Oregon worse—not better—for Oregonians with the lowest of incomes. The bill would strip tenants of their right to cure violations of a rental agreement after three “material breaches.” Even if the tenant does have the means to cure a third material breach—such as late rent—HB 2305 arms landlords with the ability to both [1] recover that past-due rent and [2] evict the tenant anyway.

Landlords already have many tools at their disposal to evict their tenants, and they are using them frequently. Since Oregon’s pandemic eviction moratorium ended, there has been an average of more than 2,100 eviction filings each month since October 2022.⁵ Stripping tenants of their right to cure is not only unnecessary—it will also further deepen our state’s housing and homelessness crisis.

Number of Eviction Cases Filed in Oregon by Month (All Years)



Includes data from cases filed in circuit courts only.
As of January 16, 2025.
Chart: Evicted in Oregon • Source: Oregon Judicial Department's court records • Created with Datawrapper

The Legislature should focus on solutions to our housing crisis, not on measures that worsen it. We urge you to oppose HB 2305 and focus your attention on measures that solve our housing crisis and that—by extension—end one of the largest root causes of hunger in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Loren Naldoza
Public Policy Advocate
Oregon Food Bank

⁵ Oregon Law Center, *Statewide Eviction Landscape: Presentation to Senate Interim Committee on Housing and Development*, Dec. 10, 2024. <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/202311/Downloads/CommitteeMeetingDocument/287249>.

