

Submitter: Edith Gillis

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2305

If you allow HB 2305 to become law, you will guarantee more people becoming unhoused, losing their ability to earn or pay taxes and volunteer and heal, and you will cost Oregonians more via greater demands on our tax-supported state and local agencies and federal funding and through nonprofits having less money and fewer volunteers to serve Oregon's economy and social justice that depend on all Oregonians having secure housing justice. HB 2305 allows landlords too much power when they already have too much power and it prevents tenants who are already unjustly disadvantaged, any practical access to due process or justice.

I have been a tenant in Oregon since September 1976 (48 1/2 years), except for two years in which I paid exorbitant down payments and was paying too-high mortgage that I was cheated out of when the sellers prevented us from learning how the two houses were unsafe and uninhabitable, and the federal government would not give loans for the remaining sale price. All the decades I was renting in Oregon, I paid my rent in full on time, the renters' insurance, utilities as required, etc. and the landlords said I was an ideal tenant they did not want to lose. Yet, this last summer Home Forward (the former Housing Authority of Portland) evicted me so they could demolish Peaceful Villa and rebuild units for which they planned to charge higher rents while providing less space, and not having any unit safe or healthy for me. The federal law for the funding they received required them to assist us tenants being unhoused to find suitable alternative housing for the same rent, yet each time HF kept changing the move-out date and then telling us to NOT move out on or by the earlier dates required. Several landlords gave me excellent references saying that if they could, they'd love to rent to me (some again.) Then because Home Forward could not find suitable ADA compliant housing, and/or their contractors did not respond to potential new landlords in time, I had no place to move to. They did not have staff or records and closed their accounting so they refused to accept my rent or count me as having paid, they returned my rent checks and then said I didn't pay, thereby harming my record/reputation. Then Home Forward gave me less than one week notice to leave and evicted me falsely "for cause" claiming I was in violation of the lease with their changing moveout dates (they were the ones breaking laws and contracts) and they did not give me time or means to find alternative housing or answers to landlords who wanted to rent to me, and they did not allow me means or time to get an attorney specializing in landlord/tenant law, disability rights, and personal injury/environmental poisoning to go to court for due process. Soon thereafter, the entire two blocks were demolished. For several months their staff did not know where I should pay rent how, and refused to take or process my rent I always called ahead of time to confirm someone would give me a receipt for my rent

which I paid in full on time to their various offices, where they often would be closed during office hours.

Oregonians without Portland's protections would have been thereby prevented from having housing with that landlord's false record/libel, extortion/terrorism, and the unfairly additional costs. If HB 2305 were law, I wouldn't be alive today, and I would not have been able to help so many elders with disabilities in their homes or barely surviving on the streets, and I would not have been able to prevent several suicides. I know of too many horrific examples of landlords not processing rent checks or allowing direct deposit or otherwise falsely accusing tenants when landlords do not provide legal, safe, healthy housing. For decades I have delivered food, water, blankets/tarps, etc. to hundreds of Portlanders made houseless because of criminal landlords against whom they have no recourse because Oregon law discriminates against tenants and workers.