

March 14th, 2025
Senate Committee on Housing and Development
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St NE Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for SB 722

Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Robert Damian Hinman, and I am writing in strong support of SB 722, which will help prevent displacement and extreme rent spikes by strengthening Oregon's rent stabilization laws and prohibiting the use of price-fixing software to artificially inflate rents.

I have experienced firsthand how the rising cost of rent threatens the stability of families across Oregon. Rent is my largest monthly expense, and with inflation driving up the cost of everything else, affording housing has only become more difficult. The previous 10% rent cap helped moderate increases, but it was not enough to prevent displacement. I was forced to leave a rental complex after a Los Angeles-based venture capital firm took over, prioritizing profits over tenants' stability. Additionally, I have faced income discrimination, making it harder to secure housing even when I could afford it. The financial burden of rent hikes is not just an inconvenience—it disrupts families, forces people to relocate, and creates long-term instability.

SB 722 is a necessary and urgent step toward stabilizing Oregon's rental market. By reducing the new construction exemption from 15 years to 7 years, this bill would extend rent stabilization protections to an additional 40,000 housing units and benefit up to 100,000 Oregonians. This change ensures that newly built housing contributes to long-term affordability rather than fueling gentrification and displacement.

Furthermore, SB 722 addresses the harmful practice of price-fixing through AI software, which has been used to manipulate rental prices and maximize corporate profits at the expense of renters. Many jurisdictions are already taking action against these unethical practices, and Oregon must do the same to protect tenants from artificially inflated rents.

A clear and enforceable limit on annual rent increases would provide families like mine the ability to budget and plan for the future without the constant fear of being priced out of our homes. Renters should not have to absorb unpredictable costs while corporations reap the benefits. For all of these reasons, I urge you to pass SB 722 and take a necessary step toward real housing stability in Oregon.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to Oregon communities.

Sincerely,
Robert Damian Hinman