

Submitter: Mathias Quackenbush

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB722

Dear Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson and members of the committee,

My name is Mathias Quackenbush. I live in Portland and work as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, supporting Veterans in transitioning from homelessness. In my capacity, I have heard dozens of Veterans share the stories of how they lost their housing. A common denominator for many is corporate landlords who are not invested in truly supporting people in maintaining housing stability. When people living with low income, especially those who are struggling to maintain rent payments through participation in paid employment, are faced with sudden rent spikes, this can combine with ruthless practices around eviction for nonpayment to turn a few sick-days that result in lost income, or a lost money-order, into a slide into homelessness. Rent increases should be limited, predictable, and incremental. They should not be based on the logic of ruthless maximization of market advantage that new price-fixing softwares addressed by SB 722 are designed to facilitate. When the basic human right that is housing is exploited to squeeze resources from the poorest and most vulnerable, we are left with the current status quo of widespread homelessness. SB 722 would take a step toward restoring a modicum of fairness to the rental housing market. Please vote yes!