

March 18th, 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 Christopher Quale, and I am writing in strong support of SB 722 and SB 611 to advocate for stronger tenant protections, including rent stabilization and fair housing policies. While I have not personally faced rent increases in newer buildings, my experience navigating Oregon's rental market has shown me how deeply flawed and discriminatory our system can be.

One of the biggest barriers I have encountered is the requirement for a co-signer, despite being a responsible tenant. For many renters—especially those with disabilities or fixed incomes—this requirement makes it nearly impossible to secure stable housing. Additionally, I have been subjected to inappropriate inspections, such as being asked to check for loose wires and hot wiring—tasks that should only be handled by licensed professionals, not tenants. These types of policies and practices create unnecessary hardships and reinforce a system that disproportionately harms the most vulnerable renters.

The ability to afford a home should not come down to arbitrary requirements or unchecked landlord practices. Rent caps, tenant protections, and enforcement of fair housing laws are critical to ensuring that renters are not forced into impossible situations. SB 722 would extend rent stabilization protections by reducing the new construction exemption from 15 years to 7 years, ensuring that more tenants have access to rent limits that prevent excessive hikes. The bill also prohibits price-fixing AI software, which landlords use to artificially inflate rents, making Oregon's rental market even less accessible. SB 611 strengthens protections by capping annual rent increases at a reasonable rate, ensuring that tenants are not priced out of their homes.

Oregon's rental market is becoming increasingly inaccessible, and without action, more tenants will continue to struggle with affordability and discriminatory barriers. I urge you to stand with renters and pass these critical bills to create a more just and stable housing system.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to protecting Oregon renters.

Sincerely,
Christopher M. Quale