

Testimony in Support of Rent Stabilization & Anti-A.I. Price Fixing (SB 722)

Angela Zehava

March 19th, 2025

Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Andersen, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Angela Zehava, I am a resident of Portland, and I am writing to urge your support for SB 722. I am a landlord, and I have volunteered with the homeless community. As a landlord, I claim that because the value of our properties is rising so quickly and steadily, we really don't need to make tenants bear rent increases. We rent our property at about 50% market rate, but our long term tenant has, over the last 15 years, nearly paid off our mortgage on the property. Meanwhile, the market value of that property has steadily risen.

Secondly, I knew an elderly couple that became homeless because their landlord doubled the rent to get everyone out so he could convert it to condos. The man was a former addict who had been stable many years, but after becoming homeless, he started using again and the couple broke up. After some time, the community finally found her stable housing. She told me that there was also a young couple with a newborn in the building. She didn't know what became of them. This behavior is now illegal, but the current limits could be used the same way, because most people are not making enough to bear increases.

We also need to prevent landlords of apartment buildings leaving apartments empty. If they are required to keep their buildings full, then they must respond to the market (rather than, for instance, leaving a \$1700/mo studio empty rather than bringing down the price). One option would be to require that an apartment that sits empty for more than 3 months must reduce the rent asked. We also need to control all the little fees that landlords add on to rent.

I urge you to support SB 722. Thank you.