

Submitter:

Donna Meeuwsen

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB722

I support this bill. The proposed bill is a necessary step toward ensuring fair and transparent rental practices in Oregon. By prohibiting landlords from using software that relies on nonpublic competitor data to set rent prices or occupancy rates, the bill prevents algorithmic price-fixing that can artificially inflate rental costs. These software programs often create an unfair advantage for landlords by allowing them to manipulate supply and demand in ways that would not naturally occur in the open market. This practice harms tenants by driving up rental prices beyond what is reasonable for the local economy, exacerbating the housing affordability crisis. The bill ensures that rental rates are determined by market forces rather than secretive algorithms, promoting a fairer and more competitive housing market.

Additionally, the bill strengthens tenant protections by reducing the exemption period for rent caps on new rental properties from 15 years to seven years. This change strikes a balance between allowing property owners to recoup their investment and preventing long-term rent gouging in newly built housing. By reducing this exemption period, the bill helps ensure that more tenants benefit from rent stabilization policies sooner, providing them with greater financial predictability and security. In a time when housing costs continue to rise, these measures offer much-needed relief to renters while still allowing landlords to operate within a reasonable framework. This legislation is a crucial step toward fostering a more equitable housing market that prioritizes both fairness and affordability.