



Date: March 26, 2025

To: Senate Committee on Housing and Development

From: Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA)

RE: Support for SB 722 (oppose Dash 1 Amendment)

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

On behalf of the Oregon Health Equity Alliance, OHEA, we are writing in strong support of SB 722, which will help prevent displacement and extreme rent spikes by extending coverage of our state's reasonable rent stabilization statutes to more units. We oppose the Dash 1 Amendments which would gut the bill.

OHEA is a people of color-led collaborative, organized to center and uplift the wisdom of our communities of color through racial justice informed health equity policies and practices. OHEA serves Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties as one of nine regional health equity coalitions across Oregon. We know that 88% of evictions are because tenants cannot afford Oregon's high rents. At OHEA we see this as an important social determinant of health that is affecting all of our community members. Our communities should not have to choose which of their needs is coming first especially as we continue to see increased rising prices of other needs.

SB 772 will extend Oregon's prohibition on extreme, price-gouging rent increases to cover the residents of some 40,000 additional homes statewide. Expanding the rent stabilization statute to cover more units is the only policy tool on the table this session that would provide immediate and measurable protection for Oregonians at risk. Production is important but will take years to have an impact on rent levels. We cannot rely on new development of market-rate housing as the single strategy to solve our current affordability crisis. This approach will take years to have any impact, and renters need help now.

SB 722 is needed to protect housing stability over corporate profits, and to prevent further escalation of the homelessness crisis. The bill strikes a balance between encouraging investment in new housing and ensuring that tenants are protected from excessive rent hikes, fostering a more stable and equitable housing market.

High rents are pushing more and more families into crisis. We cannot ask families who are struggling now to wait 15 years before new construction begins to be protected from rent spikes. Waiting is not an option for the thousands of Oregon families currently on the brink.

For all of these reasons, we urge your strong support of this bill. The legislature has an opportunity to help Oregonians through supporting SB 722. We urge you to vote yes and oppose the -1 amendment.

Sincerely,
Oregon Health Equity Alliance