



Oregon moms and caregivers fighting for gender, economic, and racial justice.

To: Senate Committee on Housing and Development
From: Family Forward Oregon
Date: 3/26/2025
RE: In Support of SB 722

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

Family Forward is in strong support of Senate Bill 722, which would help prevent displacement and extreme rent spikes by extending coverage of our state's reasonable rent stabilization statutes to more units. We oppose the -1 amendment which would strip out the new construction exemption improvements and gut the bill.

Oregon renters face a significant burden, ranking 6th in the nation for cost-burdened households. The state's eviction crisis is escalating, with over 27,000 cases filed last year. A staggering 88% of these evictions are directly attributed to tenants' inability to afford Oregon's exorbitant rents. As a result, many families are teetering on the edge, and it is imperative that we take immediate action to implement effective solutions to address this pressing issue.

While increasing production is crucial for addressing the long-term demand for housing, it's essential to acknowledge that this approach alone won't provide immediate relief for those struggling with unaffordable rents. The development of new market-rate housing units takes time, often several years, before they become available and start to impact rent levels. Meanwhile, renters are facing unprecedented affordability challenges today. They need tangible solutions that can provide relief now, not in the distant future. Relying solely on new development as a strategy to solve our current affordability crisis is insufficient; we must explore and implement additional measures that can offer immediate assistance to those in need.

SB 722 will broaden Oregon's ban on extreme, price-gouging rent increases to encompass an additional 40,000 homes across the state, offering crucial protection to thousands of residents. By expanding the rent stabilization statute, this bill provides a vital policy solution that can deliver immediate and tangible relief to Oregonians who are struggling with unaffordable housing costs.

Nationally, it has been demonstrated that rent stabilization is an effective tool for enhancing housing stability and affordability for tenants. By prioritizing community residents over

corporate profits, rent stabilization fosters longer tenancies and more stable communities. Research has shown that rent stabilization does not impede new construction, as evidenced by the fact that Oregon's 7% plus CPI with a 10% cap policy allows for necessary rent adjustments while still promoting affordability. Furthermore, most developers and their lenders assume only a 3% rent increase when creating pro-formas, indicating that extreme rent hikes are not required to cover expenses and pay back loans in newly constructed properties.

We oppose the -1 amendment that aims to strip out the new construction exemption improvements, gutting the bill. One of the main concerns we have is that the amendment would reduce the duration of exemptions from caps on residential rent increases, which could lead to higher rents for many families. This could disproportionately affect low-income and marginalized communities, who are already struggling to make ends meet. Additionally, the amendment's focus on rent control measures may not address the root causes of Oregon's housing affordability crisis, such as a lack of affordable housing options and rising construction costs. This could lead to unintended consequences, such as reduced investment in new housing development or increased rents for certain types of housing units.

The escalating rent crisis in Oregon is pushing numerous families to the edge, and it's imperative that we take immediate action. We cannot expect struggling families to wait 15 years for new construction to provide relief from skyrocketing rents. The reality is that thousands of Oregon families are already teetering on the brink, and waiting is no longer a viable option for them.

Family Forward urges you to vote YES on SB 722 and protect Oregonian's right to stable housing.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jelina Biniam

Advocacy Manager
Family Forward Oregon

