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On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3054

My disabled husband and I have lived in a Salem 55+ park for 14 years now. When we first moved in in 2011 our lot rent was \$450 a month. Rent increases were usually anywhere from \$10 a year to \$20 if at all. The park was owned and managed by a local family and they were easily approachable and easy to work with. A few years ago the father of the family passed away and the children decided to sell the park. A California company, WGP Property Management, purchased the park and began raising rent. Our lot rent is now almost \$900 a month. In that time my husband's social security has gone up either not at all or just 1 or 2 percentage points for a COLA adjustment every year. Most of our neighbors have a fixed income and are in their 70s, 80s, and 90s. They cannot work outside the home. They cannot afford to hire landscapers to mow their yards, or pay for repairs, much less utilities, food, prescriptions, with these rent increases. They cannot have a family member move in with them to help because 55+ parks age restrict live in caregivers and family helpers as well. It seems that the way 55+ parks are set up that they leave elderly tenants little chance at stability and sustainability now. If anyone questions the park's reasoning eventually you'll hear "well, they can just sell the park to a developer and make everybody move." In today's financial climate with the housing crisis, the unending increases in utility costs, and dismal COLA increases, pricing seniors and the disabled out of their homes and basic needs will only eventually add to homelessness. Threatening to kick everyone out isn't a solution, either. There should also be protections put in place to prevent parks being sold to developers that will force seniors out. I urge this committee to continue to find ways in which to reign in housing issues and costs beyond this bill as well, not just for 55+ parks, but for everyone. I applaud the Oregon House for passing this bill and working towards real solutions.