

Submitter:

Natalie Barnes

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3054

I've lived in Creswell Court MHP, Creswell OR, since August 2018. I am an impoverished senior in my 70's, living solely on Social Security, Medicare and federal and state assistance. Creswell is a rural town of approximately 5800 people. On this side of town live the poor and working class. This MHP is a family park and its residents reflect the make-up of the town. There are no amenities here, no perks. A number of the homes have fallen behind in upkeep and repair due to financial difficulties. Right after moving here in 2018, the park was sold. Rents that were \$400 per month, including water/sewer, went up to \$450 and water meters were installed. In 2020, with all the fear and uncertainty of COVID, all residents received a letter from the owner (bypassing the management company he hired) in which he raised the rents 10%, blaming the Democrats in the Oregon Legislature. Basically our rent was raised the maximum amount for his MAGA politics. He has since continued raising the rents the maximum amount while the water billing company he hired fell further and further behind in billing for the utility. At the latter part of last year the owner hired a new, more professional, hire-powered management company that services Washington and Oregon. They fired our local, full-time manager, fired the water billing company and billed us for six months of water usage within a six week period. No advance notice, no concern if a tenant didn't have hundreds of dollars available for this. If one of the bills was even one day late in payment, an eviction notice was issued. Many people here received an eviction notice, warranted or not. Our new local management is only part-time now. Our rent this year is \$600 per month. We've just received notice that rents will go up 9%, reflecting current law, to \$655 in August. In addition, starting in June, a utility fee is being passed through to us of \$19.19 per month bringing our total rent increase to a whopping \$75.00 per month!

Where are the tenants, particularly those on a fixed income, supposed to get this money?! No lower income job gives a 12.5 annual pay increase. No Social Security increase has EVER been 12.5%. As rents go up, the percentage rent is calculated by rises too so 10% of \$600 already packs in an additional \$20 per month than calculating from the original rent of 10% of \$400. The way I see it, a rent cap of 6% is a median compromise. I wholly support this legislation. I wish it went further and used the original rent as the basis for calculating the increase.