

Submitter: Wendy Cluse

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

Dear Chair Jama, Vice Chair Anderson and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development,

I'm writing to ask that you prioritize the swift passage of Senate Bill 611. Four in 10 Oregonians rent their homes and are already paying some of the highest rents in the nation.

Keeping rent reasonable impacts me personally. My rent has already gone up 8% this year, and I fear I'll see another rent increase by the end of 2023. It's only a matter of time before my increasing rent outpaces my income and I'll have to leave Portland. There is no option to "downsize" or move neighborhoods - rent is too high for folks of a modest income everywhere in the region. My neighbor lives with her 2 elderly housebound parents and she has already seen 2 rent hikes this year. This system is unsustainable for moderate-to-lower income households and we need to be working toward keeping them in their homes, not ensuring landlord profits.

Everyone in Oregon deserves safe and stable housing but our high rental costs and housing inequities are forcing families out of their homes. While the Oregon housing market provides skyrocketing property wealth for landlords, renters have nothing to fall back on when their monthly costs rise beyond their paychecks.

Very few people can afford a 14.6% housing cost increase. Getting an increase that high may as well be an eviction notice for Oregon renters.

SB 611 is a reasonable approach. Allowable annual rent increases for current tenants will be more predictable for current tenants and more homes will be protected. And between tenants, landlords can charge whatever the market will bear for vacant units.

SB 611 does not solve all the inequities in our housing market, but it is an important step to more fairness and is an essential element in the legislature's response to the state's housing and homelessness crisis.

Please vote yes on SB 611 to prevent more high-rent homelessness in our communities.

Sincerely,
Wendy Cluse