

Submitter: Sean Morgan
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB722

Dear members of the Committee,

My name is Sean Morgan, and I am writing to encourage all of you to support SB722.

As all of you may or may not be aware, rent prices on dwellings of all sorts have skyrocketed in the past several decades, even in areas that are traditionally considered "low-rent" or "inexpensive." I have experienced this both personally and secondhand- friends forced to move out of their homes due rent increases, family being evicted to make the space available for higher-paying tenants, and even people I know being left homeless due to the increasing crunch of stagnant wages and rising rent. This isn't just an issue that affects the younger generations, either-increasingly elders are finding that prices in care facilities and dedicated housing are ballooning out of control and completely out of sync with inflation or any other reasonable explanation.

Everyone needs a place to live. Everyone deserves someplace to call their own, even if it's just an apartment or a room in a house. And, increasingly, we are seeing collusion by large rental companies to fix prices as high as possible- and AI agents will only make this easier to do, while taking the decision out of the hands of any human agent so that the managers and owners of those rental companies can shrug their shoulders and deny any responsibility because "the computer sets the rent fairly, it's out of our hands."

For some time now, Oregon has made steps to protect its citizens from predation by unfair renting processes, and I think its important that we continue those protections into the future. Companies are adapting their methods to try and take advantage of renters in whatever way they can get away with, and so it is important that we continue to extend to protections into new areas to ensure that those new technologies are not used unfairly. Without them, people in all parts of the state will find themselves priced out of the places they live; many citizens are already working 60 or 80 hour weeks just to afford to live in their current situation, to say nothing of future rent increases. The phrase "it's expensive just to be alive" is one I hear almost daily, and it's true- more and more people are unable to afford even the basic necessities in their life. If rents continue to increase as they have, this will only get worse, and the legislature needs to move to prevent that.

Please vote supporting SB722, and give Oregonians the protections that are needed against further unfair rent increases.

Sincerely,
Sean Morgan