



Critical Eviction Reform

10/30/2023

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, Members of the Committee,

My name is Nick Keough, and I am the Legislative Director of the Oregon Student Association. **I am writing you all today to ask you to pass SB 799 as quickly as possible.**

Oregon Student Association advocates for the interests of students in postsecondary institutions in Oregon. This includes the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of Oregon students.

We know all too well that eviction, displacement, and homelessness are particularly difficult for young people and students. Oregon has one of the highest student homelessness rates in the country. 23,765 Oregon students experienced homelessness at some point in 2022. These students' circumstances put them at an incredible disadvantage through no fault of their own. They are unable to adequately study, adequately learn, and wholly engage in their education. Consequently, they are 27% less likely to graduate from high school than housed students. There are additionally less likely to continue to college.

As is no surprise to anyone, post-secondary education is in an affordability crisis. Tuition, mandatory fees, student housing, and textbooks have skyrocketed in prices far above inflation. Students are struggling deeply to afford attending our colleges and universities. In the process of trying to complete their degrees, students are living on the edge financially. According to the state economist, more than 50% of Oregon renters do not have enough money left over for food, medicine, basic necessities.

It is for these reasons that our student leaders feel that more must be done to protect renters from harmful eviction. SB 799 is part of the Homelessness Prevention Package that includes \$100 million in new rent assistance, SB 611 / HB 2733 to limit the exorbitant and abusive rent increases too many landlords are imposing this year, and the Rental Market Data Bill for greater transparency into this essential component of Oregon's housing availability. These changes cannot wait.

Reducing evictions is an essential part of our housing and homelessness response. As Governor Kotek and legislative leadership commit to increasing the housing supply and rehousing our homeless neighbors, we must also ensure that the people who are housed today don't end up on the streets themselves. **The Oregon Student Association and students urge you to support SB 799.**

Thank you,

Nick Keough
Legislative Director
Oregon Student Association
nick@orstudents.org