

Submitter: Kevin Kincaid
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3054
Chair Marsh and members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of HB 3054. At this very moment, Oregon is suffering due to the extremely high cost of housing. Years of building primarily single family homes have limited the available supply of housing. Large businesses have taken advantage of this fact through buying up the limited available apartments and mobile home parks and proceeding to raise rent as much as possible. Since there are fewer and fewer affordable housing options, individuals living in these places are trapped even though massive rent increases. As businesses buy up more and more properties, they are able to collaborate to all raise prices.

Limiting rent increases to an absolute maximum of 10% (or less if the change in CPI is below 3%) is a good start, but I would argue this bill does not go far enough. A 10% change in housing cost is far beyond the average wage growth. If property owners raise prices at the maximum rate for multiple years in a row, that will rapidly compound and force people out of their homes. Additionally, there are many seniors living in mobile home parks with fixed income that have been experiencing rapid rent increases. Oregon should take stronger steps to protect its senior citizens from predatory rent prices.

The property owners main argument is that they cannot maintain properties if they are not allowed to raise rents by more than 10% each year. Yet, in this very public hearing, the testimony speaks to how residents already deal with issues of owners and managers not maintaining the property. Furthermore, the people in these places are being priced out of their households. Property maintenance seems unimportant if no one can afford to live there. Since our state is already dealing with a homeless crisis, we should work to prevent additional people from being priced onto the street.

I urge you to support HB 3054 with amendments to make the maximum rent increase even more limited.

Thank you for your time and consideration.