

March 26, 2023

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

My name is Ashley Henry, and I am a landlord and homeowner residing in SE Portland. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 611.

I strongly urge you to pass SB 611 as a critical homelessness prevention strategy, to protect seniors, families, individuals and communities across the state from extreme rent increases and displacement. As we work on the important longer term solutions of increasing housing supply, SB 611 is an action that the legislature can take now to have an immediate stabilizing impact and prevent further harm.

Oregon rents are already some of the highest in the nation, and too many households are just one rent increase away from losing their home.

I know from my personal experience as a “mom and pop” landlord that reasonable landlords will not be constrained by passage of SB 611. Although I have experienced increased costs due to inflation, the increases allowed under SB 611 more than allows me to cover those. I also recently made improvements to my rental apartment and was reminded of the extent to which the tax code generously benefits landlords and homeowners.

Oregon’s housing emergency goes beyond lack of supply and the number of people living without homes or shelter. We have a rental emergency as well, with tenants living just one rent increase notice away from displacement and possible homelessness. I am shocked and offended that some of the loudest voices complaining about our homelessness crisis are themselves landlords. We all have a critical role to play in addressing this crisis, and without SB 611 to stop runaway and extreme rent increases, we will continue to see people displaced onto the streets more quickly than we can rehouse people.

Please pass SB 611 as soon as possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E. Ashley Henry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "E." at the beginning, followed by "Ashley" and "Henry" stacked vertically.

E. Ashley Henry