

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

I'm writing to express my support for SB 722, to strengthen protections for Oregonians who rent their homes.

As a tenant organizer and social science researcher focusing on housing policy, I have heard story after story about lives wrecked by big rent increases. On the flip side, in my dissertation research and forthcoming book on living with strong local rent control, I learned about the many positive impacts the policy has on not only individuals and families, but on communities more broadly.

I found that when renters have sustainable and predictable housing costs and tenancies they have less housing related stress, more money to spend on local businesses or save for the future, the ability to make career and education choices that support self-actualization and stability long-term, and incentive to put down roots and become engaged with their communities through volunteer work and other activities. Rent control also results in apartment communities with long-term residents who form networks of support both within and beyond the building, rather than a "revolving door" of tenants that stems from unchecked rent increases and few tenant protections.

Given these benefits, and that tenants in Class A (aka newer) apartment communities are likely already paying close to top-of-the-market rents, it's more than reasonable to restrict increases to the current formula stipulated in SB 608 and subsequent legislation. This 10% increase is already generous to landlords by any standards, and it's difficult to imagine a scenario in which a landlord would suddenly need to charge a tenant paying top dollar for their home more than what is allowed under that rubric.

Sincerely,
Lauren E.M. Everett, PhD
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