

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

Our names are Alan and Virginia Beck and we are senior retirees residing in Eugene. We strongly urge passage of SB 611, which addresses the critical need for rental stability including limiting the amount of rent increase to 3% plus CPI per year or a total of 8% whichever is less here in Oregon.

The reality of the affordable housing emergency grabbed my attention when the new out-of-state

owners of our retirement community, the Eugene Hotel Retirement Center, notified its senior residents that our rent had been increased to 14% in 2023. Historically, the former owners (local citizens of the Eugene community) had increased the rent an average of 3% per year. That means that retired people moved by our residents as excessive and personally unsustainable in the future. If I face rent increases like the one this year in the future, I will have to look for more affordable housing elsewhere (if it exists)! Since November, several senior residents have moved out; within the past week, four more seniors became nominees for retirement by the end of this month. The prospect of an unstable future is increasing rapidly among their peers.

Landlords who seek such high increases in rent annually should not be allowed to invest in senior retirement communities where individuals on limited or fixed income have to carefully plan their long-term financial stability by saving money for rent increases in rent can take rental expenses far beyond an affordable range.

Furthermore, any new bill needs some type of commonly recognized framework or guidelines for anticipating future annual rate of increase. The CPI is based on food only. There are other indexes that are more broadly based and include other costs of living for seniors, including rent and medical expenses. Some experts recommend using the CPI-E for figuring rent increases. There is no denying that the lack of affordable and available housing and the abrupt and dispropotionally high financial burden placed on the low or fixed income, young adult and seniors that women, minorities and other at-risk populations constitute an unfair price for unjust laws that destabilize too many lives.

I strongly urge you to pass SB 611 as quickly as possible. The sad truth is this: Either you support us now or you support us when we enter the welfare system.

Thank you for your consideration and your public service.

Sincerely,

Alan M. and Virginia Beck