

Submitter: Eve Woods

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

I have been a resident of Jackson County for most of my life. I was born here. As time has moved forward it has become increasingly more challenging to afford just basic living expenses here. The cost of living for rentals has doubled and even tripled in many areas of this valley and specifically in Medford. A 350 sq foot studio that barely fits a queen sized bed, a dresser and a kitchenette used to rent for under \$300 a month. Now rents for \$1250 a month. That is insanity.

In 2019 I moved into a grandmother suite apartment that was attached to the owner/landlords property. I rented that 300 sq foot space for \$750 a month. I could barely afford it and my basic bills. When a major fire burned through 3 of the surrounding towns in the Rogue Valley, people were desperate for housing. My landlord was given offers from people who would pay 2x what my rent was just to have a roof over their head. Desperate people do desperate things. My landlords saw dollar signs and took it upon themselves to make my stay very uncomfortable. She wanted me to move so she could charge more rent. They harassed me, played loud music at all hours of the day and night. They chopped wood at 11PM. Her sons did skateboard tricks in the room above my apartment. They cut a hole in my wall that was attached to the main house. I called the police to discover she can make changes to the property because it is hers. I called Community Alliance of Tenants and they protested with me. I was on the news for her actions. Alas, now her, her dog, her kids and whomever she brought in the house, now had access to my apartment. That was a blatant disregard of my privacy, my belongings and our rental agreement. She later turned off my electricity and the water to that space. I was able to legally require her to turn my utilities back on but the harassment was overwhelming. While I was gone, "Someone" broke into my apartment. I immediately called the police when I discovered the door had been kicked in. As we walked in we discovered there was graffiti everywhere. The officer took finger prints, pictures and filed a police report. It seemed very likely that my landlord's children and their friends had been to blame. I moved out the belongings that were not vandalized and never went back. My safety was more important to me. I was traumatized.

I have been on the hunt for a stable rental that I could afford, ever since. The limited supply and great demand is outrageous. I am a disabled person and have limited income. I was only recently approved for a section 8 housing voucher. It took me 6 months to find a rental that would fit within the parameters of the regulations of the voucher and also pass a HUD inspection. I was only allotted \$985 a month for a 1 bedroom apartment in Medford, where I lived. I never found a rental for that price

in Medford. I had to move 25 minutes out of town to find a place I could afford. Even then the waiting lists and availability was a challenging obstacle. I was one of the lucky ones that actually found a place and was approved. So many other people have not had the same luck. I have personally seen people from transitional housing be thrown out on the streets when they didn't find more permanent housing in the expected time frames allowed. I have seen people living on the streets and sleeping in the rain. During this last 4 years I juggled with choices and obstacles that made me one moment away from being on the streets myself.

If there is a rent increase, I will no longer be able to afford this rental and my voucher cap will have been reached. Being disabled and on Section 8, I will not have many options available to me. If there is a rent increase, I will be homeless.
Please vote to Approve the SB611 and allow me to remain living in a stable home. I am one of thousands of people that are simply just trying to stay housed.