

Submitter: Lea Belton
On Behalf Of: DSA Housing Group and myself and my fellow renters
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure, Appointment or SB722
Topic:

Dear Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support of SB 722, which will ban price-fixing software that inflates rent prices.

My fellow renters and I know that the rising eviction rates are largely caused by rent being way too high and rising. I'm sure others who have given testimony on this have shared many facts and figures about how this is the cause of the housing crisis. It is. The simple solution is to listen to renters, look at the eviction rate and look at who is being evicted. It is working class families.

My fellow renter activists and I have surveyed and intentionally talked to renters in all Portland districts as well as East Multnomah County (East of District 1). My fellow renters agree that rent is too high. We all agree that it is about time legislators pay attention to that. We want the narrative to change from being about the housing market to being about the humans who need housing. It is a basic need. We know what we are talking about when we tell you rent is too high. Help us stop the spikes in rent and stop the artificial vacancy rates by supporting HB 722. Help us slow the eviction rate by banning landlords from using software that artificially price-fixes rents as well as vacancy rates.

People are being evicted because no matter how hard they try to earn that money each month, their paychecks are not good enough for the landlord who is making decisions based on the market, which is now being dictated by software that artificially fixes rent costs and vacancy rates.

I am tired of feeling like my and my fellow renters' paychecks may be a few dollars short of our rent costs and that I will receive a pay or quite notice on my door. My parents have been lifelong renters and I have been one my whole adult life. Most of my pay check goes to rent. Do not allow landlords to make me give them even more due to software that is dictating the market. Listen to renters.

SB 722 is the only policy tool on the table this session that would have a timely, direct protection for all Oregon renters living in fear about rent costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your service to Oregon communities. Please serve us well by supporting SB 722.

In urgency,
Lea Belton
Lifelong renter & co-chair, DSA Housing Working Group