

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

Dear Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson and members of the committee,

My name is Samantha Ishihara and I live in Portland City Council District 3. I'm currently a graduate student and also an environmental educator, and here to talk about supporting SB 722.

As an environmental educator and student, I do not have much room in my monthly budget to account for a 15% rent spike. Educators as a profession are typically underpaid and overworked, but due to my passion for the field, I try to make it work. Other than that, in pursuing higher education, my goal is to make enough to support myself and my family. With a 15% rent spike, it makes the likelihood of achieving that goal more challenging. Protecting rent spikes for all Oregonians is important. We are already in a housing crisis as a country, and supporting Oregonians can be a first step in being a leader in supporting its state residents. I have never personally received a rent increase as an adult, but have lived through rent increases as a child. Growing up, my mother was constantly moving places due to rent increases, which meant that her, myself, and my two younger siblings had to help look for a new place to live, packing up our stuff, and navigating the already difficult housing market and situation from a young age. This is something that I would never wish upon young children and teenagers to experience. As an educator in Oregon, I have met many high schoolers who couldn't come to school due to having to translate housing documents for their parents or needing to go to work to help their parents pay their rent. This is clearly a statewide issue that not only affects housing but also education, mental health, and other life outcomes. Furthermore, learning about the usage of AI in housing is disheartening. With homes playing a personal and placemaking role for many people, it feel insensitive and inhumane to be using these practices in this field.

In conclusion, I ask that you support SB 722 and protect Oregonians from unreasonable rent spikes.