

Submitter: Rachel Shelly

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB611

Dear Hearing Committee Members:

After attending the first hour of the public hearing on Monday, many new issues came to mind that I would like to express here.

In the opening statement, it was mentioned that there were many evictions in the past year, as many as 2000 of which ~80% were due to unpaid rent.

~Where is this study?

~When was this study? If it was in the last year, it makes sense there may be more evictions due to unpaid rent because during covid, there was an eviction moratorium, and people became in arrears in their rent and in just this past year many of these issues were finally being shaken down and sadly, ending in evictions.

~How many evictions for unpaid rent were there in 2018-before Covid and rent control? How does this compare?

~It makes sense that there would be more evictions due to unpaid rent because that is one of the only venues rental property owners have to remove a tenant who is not respecting the property or other tenants, yet are falling in some gray area that is not covered by the rules and regulations. For instance, we have a tenant who was great for 2 years, then something happened (a mental illness, marital problems, who knows) but they just snapped, and now if we ask them to mow the lawn, they threaten to take us to court for harassment, we send a notice, he mows the lawn. He sends us long diatribes about the state of the world and the injustice to him and threatens to take us to court for no apparent reason. This is a tenant we would like to move along, but due the changes for residents living in a home for more than a year, we can't send him a no cause, we can't really, do anything, so yes, if he didn't pay his rent, we would evict him.

You have given rental owners very few avenues to get out of the rental agreement with tenants. You even make it difficult for us to sell our properties, and now it is even going to be more difficult by adding dislocation fees to the sales price.

~How can these decisions be made without an accurate picture of the rental situation in Oregon? I was amazed to hear these decisions are being made without a rental survey of what tenants are paying, who they are paying them to (small investors or corporations), and what the historic rental increases are.

~Getting into a rental agreement is like getting into a marriage. We are signing a legally binding contract with people, and you have made it very difficult for us to get out. Now, for taking that risk, you are wanting to limit the amount of money we can ask to run our business. There are no limits on grocery costs, or on pharmacy or medical bills, why should housing be any different? Inflation has had an affect on us too. All those bills that tenants say have gone up, have gone up for us as well. Can we get a subsidy? Can we get help?

~Many rental property owners did not raise the rent during Covid, and last year they did raise it to make up for the years they didn't. Was that taken into account?

~The new rental properties that were exempt from the 2019 rent control are raising their rent substantially because you allowed this and they knew now was the time before that exemption would be taken away. They don't represent the rest of us.

~We waited 1.5 years before we sent out our most recent rent increase, which was more between 5-8%, even though we could have raised it the 14.7%.

We didn't raise our rent 2020 due to Covid. We didn't raise our rent during the recession 2005-2009. Now we do because we are afraid you will take away our right to raise it, or you will pass a law that restrict rent raises between tenants. It is because the large investment firms are raising their rents and increasing the market rate so we have to keep up. This is what is making us raise our rents. We are still about \$200 month lower than HUD.

~If you want more family homes, remove the Medicaid laws so that elderly people can move out of their big family homes without a Medicaid penalty.

Thank you.