

Submitter: Ricardo Waites
On Behalf Of: Ricardo Waites
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: SB611

Dear Chair Fahey, Vice-Chairs Breese-Iverson and Kropf, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Riccardo Waites, I live in Bend Oregon, and I am a father, a small business owner, and veteran of the submarine force. I have lived in Bend Oregon for 23 years.

The challenges of Living in Bend are not only challenging for the underserved in our community. In the past the corona virus pandemic, a housing shortage, and ballooned cost of rent, left our educators, healthcare workers, and service industry having a hard time making ends meet as well. Thanks to inflation some Central Oregon renters are seeing a 14.6% rent increase which makes things even harder for those with essential positions to continue to live here. limiting rent increases solidifies central Oregon as a community where affordable living is still obtainable.

Another important thing that SB 611 would do specifically here in Central Oregon is helping community stakeholders create a more diverse Central Oregon. A 14.6% rent increase can disproportionately affect people of color and make it even more challenging for these communities to find and maintain affordable housing.

Our community leaders have expressed a want and an intent to create and grow a more diverse Central Oregon so SB611 would be very important to keeping the small amount of diversity we already have and increase the opportunity for even more people from diverse backgrounds to move here and thrive. A rent increase of this magnitude at this time would destroy any chance of diversifying rural communities and continue Oregon's history of over homogenized living.

Sincerely,

Riccardo Waites

Executive Director

Central Oregon Black Leaders Assembly