

Submitter: Juniper Schaefer
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure: SB611

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Dear Chair Jama and Members of the Committee,

My name is Juniper Schaefer. I am a tenant living in Portland, OR. I'm writing today in support of Senate Bill 611. As a full-time political organizer I have been working tirelessly for the last decade to make a living wage. Everytime I get a raise, rent caps increase alongside it and since I started my career, I have been treading water to afford the ever increasing rent hikes in Portland.

This year my rent increased by \$135 with the new rent cap increase being set to 14%, I had to move out of my studio apartment and struggled to find a place to live that I could afford in Portland. I have been living on the brink of rent insecure for the last five years and I am terrified of the next rent increase next year. Landlords are making nothing but pure profit, in my previous building, not only was I paying \$1295 in rent for a small studio, I was also paying \$50 a month in my apartment's utilities, \$100 in utilities for common area utilities, as well as \$200 in parking. This means just for the cost of living alone, I was paying \$1695 monthly for my basic needs. I had to max out my credit card to survive last year and afford to eat. Landlords need to profit long-term on the investment in their buildings, not increase rent beyond what the public can afford to pay short term. It's terrifying watching the stark increase in homelessness amongst my peers, all of whom are working professionals. I worked in the Salem Capitol last year during short legislative session and at the beginning of this session but had to leave my role for a higher paying position to insure I could afford to live. The people who are being impacted by these rent caps are your neighbors, are the people walking the capitol building alongside you, and are the people making sure our laws pass. Please work to pass this bill. It is a clear decision to directly support Oregonians and reduce the risk of homelessness in our state.

Rent has to be manageable in order for folks to pay it. Anything else is courting disaster. Are you able to sleep knowing your co-workers and employees are the next group of people who could be sleeping in their cars or on the street because of these egregious rent prices? Thank you for your consideration on this common sense bill.

Juniper Schaefer