



Senate Committee on Housing  
Re: SB 608, Relating to residential tenancies

February 4, 2019

Chair Fagan, Vice Chair Girod, Members of the Committee;

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 608 to help protect tenants against no-cause evictions and economic displacement. My name is Jenny Lee, and I am the Advocacy Director at the Coalition of Communities of Color. We are a coalition of 19 culturally-specific organizations dedicated to cross-cultural, collective action for racial equity, and housing stability is one of the greatest challenges impacting the communities we serve.

Stable, affordable housing is the foundation on which families and communities thrive. Communities of color have long dealt with disproportionate housing instability and are deeply impacted by rising rents and the unjust use of no-cause evictions. We can no longer afford to ignore the effects that high mobility has on a child's educational outcomes; that increased transportation costs have on a person traveling three times further to a job interview; that unstable housing and an uncontrolled rental market have on a pregnant mother's stress levels and consequently, her health and the health of her child. Housing instability hurts families and fractures communities.

Today, we have a chance to improve the housing policies that are allowing these harms. We are all stronger when every family has stable housing and can remain in their community. By passing SB 608 to limit the unjust use of no-cause evictions and stabilize rents, we can move closer to this vision. We know that our state's housing crisis will require many solutions, but this bill is an important step to address some of the most pressing needs of renters.

We also note on behalf of the Racial Equity Legislative Report workgroup that we intend to include this legislation for analysis in the 2019 report. This report will analyze important legislation impacting communities of color in Oregon and their outcomes, including SB 608.

On behalf of the Coalition of Communities of Color, I strongly encourage you pass SB 608 to increase basic protections for the four in ten Oregonians who rent their homes. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of this legislation.

Thank you,

Jenny Lee  
Advocacy Director  
Coalition of Communities of Color

