



To: Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice-Chairs Noble and Sanchez, and Members of the House Human Services and Housing Committee  
From: Trish Meyer, Interim Executive Director  
Date: 2/17/2019  
Re: Support for SB 608

Saving Grace, Central Oregon's domestic and sexual violence intervention program, urges you to support SB 608, providing important protections against extreme rent increases and no-cause evictions. Affordable, stable and fair housing is critical to survivors' ability to leave abusive relationships and protect themselves and their children.

Saving Grace provides comprehensive domestic violence and sexual assault services, and promotes the value of living life free from violence. The organization serves over 5,000 individuals in Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson Counties annually. Saving Grace has been in operation since 1977. Since that time, Central Oregon has become an increasingly more desirable location to move to, with housing costs skyrocketing - particularly in the last few years. The need for survivors of domestic and sexual violence to have safe, affordable housing options to escape to cannot be understated, and is often a matter of life or death for those leaving abusive relationships.

Women and children fleeing from abuse are one of the most vulnerable populations in our community, and are disparately impacted by extreme rent increases. Affordability of stable housing should never be the reason domestic violence victims are forced to remain in the home, in danger, with an abusive partner. SB 608 provides critical protections that will enable survivors to safely remain within their community and rebuild a healthy, productive life.

Saving Grace frequently finds itself working with survivors being evicted by no fault of their own – abusers often use the tactic of sabotaging a victim's housing to destabilize the family. To be displaced at this dangerous time often results in victims having no choice but to face homelessness or remain with their abuser. We have witnessed far too many homicides and serious injuries as a result of victims having no safer housing option than to remain with an abuser.

We implore you to hold the lives of domestic violence survivors in mind, and to pass SB 608 to keep our community safe. Potential for eviction and extreme rent increases should never be the deciding factor when leaving an abusive relationship. Thank you for your hard work to keep Oregonians safe, happy and productive! I can be reached at [trish@saving-grace.org](mailto:trish@saving-grace.org) or (541) 815-9821 for discussion.

Respectfully,  
*Trish Meyer\**  
Trish Meyer  
Interim Executive Director

\*signed electronically

A Program of Saving Grace  
**MARY'S PLACE**  
Supervised Visit and Safe Exchange Center

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*Imagine Life without Violence.*