

February 18, 2019

House Committee on Human Services and Housing
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street
Salem, Oregon

Chair Keny Guyer, Vice-Chair Noble, Vice Chair Sanchez, Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Neighborhood Partnerships, a statewide non-profit organization, to express our strong support for Senate Bill 608 and to urge your yes vote.

Senate Bill 608 would create housing stability and the opportunity that comes with having a safe, decent, affordable place to call home for the 4 in 10 Oregonians who rent their homes. For too long, our laws in Oregon have been too weak to protect tenants from being evicted with no stated reason, and have not protected tenants from excessive and dramatic rent increases as our housing market became more competitive. It's time for that to change, and SB 608 is the right tool to make the change.

As Oregonians, we see all too clearly the damage and impacts that our current laws have on our communities. Our schools are reeling with the added instability that housing instability adds to already strained classrooms and school children. Employers are dealing with turnover, with employees who are too preoccupied with managing housing needs to perform their best at work, and our communities are bearing the costs of our neighbors who have nowhere to live besides parks, parking lots, and our sidewalks.

SB 608 is the first opportunity of many you will have this session to take action to create housing opportunity. SB 608 is a well-constructed, balanced approach that will address the needs in our communities. SB 608 will protect people who have rented their homes for twelve months or more from eviction without a stated, reasonable cause. SB 608 will limit extreme rent increases, and protect people who rent their homes from economic eviction while at the same time allowing property owners more than adequate annual rent increases.

Again, we urge your yes vote on SB 608. Thank you all for your service to our state, and for your action to build housing stability across Oregon.



Janet Byrd
Executive Director, Neighborhood Partnerships