

Senate Human Services Committee
Chair Gelser, Vice Chair Olsen, and Members of the Committee
2017 Legislative Session
May 2, 2017

RE: Yes on HB 2004A Public Hearing, May 3, 2017, 1:00 PM

Greetings,

My name is Katrina Holland. I currently serve as Executive Director of the Community Alliance of Tenants. I am a renter in Oregon, working my way toward homeownership, and a single mother of two beautiful children – a brilliant three-year-old little girl and a precious newborn son who is two months old.

I'm writing to you today to urge a yes vote for HB 2004A, that prohibits landlords from ending tenancy without cause and lifts the ban on rent-stabilization to allow local jurisdictions to consider a full range of tools to address their housing markets.

As a mother and a young woman who desires to move out of renting into homeownership, I know that a stable home will help to undergird the success of my children as I lay a foundation that will carry well into their future. I also know that in order for me to build the necessary resources to buy my own home, I will need to ensure that my living costs – most notably housing – will need to remain relatively stable so I can save without detriment to my financial stability. A place that I pay for to call home, is more than just a unit to rent – it is a place where I have to continue building my life and the lives of my children.

As an advocate who operates a company that services well over 3,000 calls per year on our hotline - with twice or three-times over the volume of calls seeking services all across Oregon - I know that many of the callers we serve depend on home to play the same or a similar role. In addition, we serve many tenants who cannot work (either because of disability or age) that rely on stable homes to help keep their lives from unraveling. Our current laws do not support their stability. Instead, our laws give unfettered control to property owners over others' housing stability.

As a taxpayer, I am worried that our laws are undermining my taxpayer dollars to help support folks with rent assistance and homelessness as people are unnecessarily shoved into needing assistance. I'm also worried that my taxpayer dollars are not going as far to help folks in need.

Housing is a critical cornerstone of our economy and state as a whole. Stable housing supports the success of our children as they grow and become contributing members to our economy. Stable housing supports businesses as they are able to have productive employees who aren't worried about where they will sleep at night. Stable housing supports medical professionals who work hard to treat their patients for the long-term,

having peace of mind that their patients will be able to recover and take care of themselves. And finally, stable housing helps support our taxpayers who are entitled to knowing that their dollars are being spent effectively. HB 2004A helps to support all these things.

HB 2004A is a critical component of a three-pronged strategy to addressing our housing crises across Oregon – 1) Building affordable housing; 2) Preserving affordable housing, and 3) Ensuring strong tenant protections to keep people in their homes and safe. As we wait for supply to catch up (some forecasts are well beyond 2030), I urge my legislators to represent the interests of over 4 in 10 Oregonians who rent and give so much to our society. Please support HB 2004A to provide fairness and stability to the millions of Oregonians who are renters.

Katrina Holland