

Dear Chair Gelser, Vice Chair Olsen, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Julia Michel and I am a renter. I live in Portland, in a sought-after neighborhood in the inner south east region of the city. I currently have 6 other roommates (we are 7 in total). We are incredibly grateful to have been residing in such an amazing location and home over the last 9 months. We live only a few blocks away from transit, commercial areas, and beautiful parks. Our home can fit all of us comfortably and we've established a cozy family vibe. As renters, we treat this house as our own. We take good care of it and do our best to make sure that our landlord is happy with us as tenants. I am proud to say that any landlord would be happy to have us as tenants.

Unfortunately, we feel as though our landlord does not seem to care about whether we do take good care of the house. We feel a hostility even though we have done nothing wrong. We recently got an eviction notice from our landlord telling us that they intend to kick us out if we do not remedy the lease violation they observed when they did a walk through of the house six months after we moved in. They said that they observed evidence of a cat living in our home. The lease says that we are not allowed to have a cat in the house.

I would like to point out that **we do not have a cat**. The only evidence that the landlord was able to provide us is the presence of cat pee odor in one of our rooms.

We took this accusation very personally. Again, we have never violated any lease rules, we have never been a nuisance to the landlord or our neighbors and therefore the false claim was just a slap in the face. Although we are aware that because we don't have a cat we are confident that we will not get evicted, our housing situation suddenly became very unpredictable and unstable. What if the reason they falsely and unreasonably claimed that we have a cat was an attempt to kick us out in order to sell their house in a very desired neighborhood? What will stop our landlord from stating other false accusations in an attempt to kick us out again? Are we going to be able to renew our lease? Will they have the power to terminate it? Additionally, this eviction notice has caused everyone in the house a lot of unnecessary stress.

I want to also say that we are all grad students in the house studying city planning. We know a lot about housing issues in Portland and we are very well versed in renter's rights. What if this happened to a person or family that does not know their rights as renters or have the same privileges and access to resources as students? What additional stress would they have to bear? Also, we see ourselves as privileged tenants, we know that we could find a new home if we were to get kicked. We are just individuals that are about to graduate and earn livable wages. What if it was a lower-income family of four going through this? The impact of getting kicked out either through a large rent increase or no cause evictions is much more harmful!

Also, if landlords first rented out their house and a year later decide to sell it, they are clearly not taking into consideration what this might imply for their tenants. It's crazy to think that housing laws in Portland do not protect renters from having to potentially move from house to house every year. Chloe Eudaly's relocation fee ordinance is the only thing saving renters right now and it's only temporary and still not enough.

Renters can't live in this environment. Housing for renters is far from fair and affordable. It's a given that more needs to be done which is why I support HB 2004A to provide fairness and stability for the millions of Oregonians who are renters. Please make the right decision.

Sincerely,

Julia Michel