



PRESS RELEASE

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Oregon House Takes Major Steps to Protect Tenants from Extreme Rent Spikes, No-Cause Evictions

SALEM – Today the Oregon House of Representatives took a major step to protect tenants from extreme rent increases and no-cause evictions – practices which have become more common in hot housing markets around the state.

House Bill 2004, which passed by a vote of 31-27, establishes a just cause eviction standard and ends the statewide prohibition on cities and counties implementing local rent stabilization measures.

Rep. Karin Power (D – Milwaukie), a chief sponsor of the bill, shared a story of one of her constituents during today’s floor debate:

“A 72-year-old woman who lives in my district visited me in Salem this month. She and her husband have received a no-cause eviction three times in the last year and a half. Meanwhile, rents are sky-rocketing throughout our community. I cannot imagine the stress and anxiety this has caused her, and others like her who have also asked for my help. Each move cuts ever-deeper into their savings. I believe the reform to landlord-tenant law in House Bill 2004 will help make sure that our communities are stable and neighbors continue to thrive.”

HB 2004 establishes a just cause eviction standard that allows for no-cause termination during the first six months of occupancy. After six months, a landlord may terminate a month-to-month tenancy only for cause, which includes all current available tenant fault-based causes. It also allows for landlords to evict for business or personal reasons, including:

- Landlord intends in good faith to make repairs or renovations and offers the unit to the tenant following the repairs and/or renovations;
- Landlord intends to convert the unit to a non-residential use or demolish it;
- Landlord has accepted an offer to purchase a unit from someone who intends to use it as a primary residence;
- Landlord or immediate family member plans to move into the unit as a primary residence.

If a landlord decides to issue evictions for business or personal reasons, they must give 90-day notice, and they must provide one month’s rent for moving expenses – unless they own four or fewer units. The just cause standard does not apply to landlords who live on the same property as the tenant and have two or fewer units.

Rep. Carla Piluso (D – Gresham), who co-sponsored the bill, spoke during the floor debate about her experience as a former law enforcement officer and as President of the Board of a local nonprofit in her district, Human Solutions.

“I have personally witnessed the challenges facing survivors after they leave a violent relationship. Once survivors leave an abusive situation, one of the most important steps to rebuilding their lives is to secure safe, stable housing. Unfortunately, affordable housing is increasingly difficult to find. When faced with a no-cause eviction or a dramatic and unplanned rent increase, survivors are often left with a heart-wrenching choice — homelessness, or returning to their abusers. Colleagues, we need to do something **now** to stabilize these incredibly vulnerable tenants.”

The bill also removes the statewide prohibition on cities and counties implementing local rent stabilization ordinances for residential rental units. If local jurisdictions choose to develop a local ordinance, HB 2004 ensures protections for property owners if those rent stabilization measures are implemented. These include:

- A fair rate of return;
- A process for landlords to request an exception when necessary to allow for a fair rate of return;
- Exempts any new residential development for a period of five years.

“Solving this crisis will require many approaches – including increasing the supply of housing and preservation of existing housing units. But we need stronger tenant protections too,” said **Rep. Chris Gorsek (D – Troutdale)**, another co-sponsor of the legislation. “House Bill 2004 is an important part of addressing the emergency that too many families find themselves in.”

The bill now moves to the Oregon Senate for consideration.

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