



OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE

For Immediate Release
Tuesday, April 4, 2017

House Republicans on HB 2004: Wrong solution to a real problem

Salem, Ore. - House Democrats today passed a restrictive rent control bill that will place a significant burden on a housing and rental market that is already facing tremendous pressure. Republicans, joined by several Democrats, argued the legislation would exacerbate Oregon's housing crisis by pushing property owners out of the rental market and shrinking the supply of available units, discouraging property owners from reinvesting in their own units by restricting their ability to turn a profit, and subjecting Oregon's rental market to a patchwork of complicated regulations.

"Oregon working families are struggling under the weight of increasing rents and a lack of affordable housing," said Representative Kennemer (R-Canby). "This is an issue that impacts Oregonians in every corner of the state, and one that deserves attention from our Legislature. But for all its good intentions, HB 2004 would be a step backward for Oregon. It would lead to a reduction in the number of rentable units on the market, disincentivize investment in units that remain on the market, and would ultimately lead to an even less affordable future."

If HB 2004 is signed into law, the bill would:

- Strip some property owners of their right to independently set rates of rent for their own properties.
- Allow local politicians to set a "fair rate of return" for private investments.
- Severely undermine a property owner's ability to make decisions about their own units -- even punishing them by forcing them to pay for a tenant's relocation fees in certain circumstances.
- Subject landlords to a complicated patchwork of rent regulations that may be markedly different from one jurisdiction to the next.

House Republicans have long championed alternative approaches to combatting Oregon's housing affordability crisis, including: incentivizing the construction of new affordable units by reducing barriers to their development, speeding up the permitting process for new construction, and modernizing Oregon's land-use system to be more accommodating to the state's rapid population growth.

"Our state's affordability crisis is the product of a basic breakdown in the laws of supply and demand," said Representative Gene Whisnant (R-Sunriver). "It is long past time for us to pursue policies that will lead to an increase in the supply of affordable housing in communities across the state and drive down rents in the process. By eliminating barriers to construction and development today, we can make progress toward a more affordable tomorrow."

HB 2004 passed on a 31-27 vote, with two Democrats joining Republicans in opposition to the legislation. The bill now moves to the Senate, where it faces an uncertain future.

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