



Memorandum

Date: March 14, 2023
To: Mayor Vinis and City Council
From: Sara McKinney, 541-682-8497
Subject: Testimony Submitted

Attached is testimony submitted at the Public Forum on March 13, 2023. A copy of this material is also included with the meeting materials posted on the web at:

<https://eugene.ompnetwork.org/embed/sessions/260551/city-council-meeting-march-13-2023>

Testimony for Eugene Public Hearing on Proposed Landlord Rule Changes

March 13, 2023

We've been small landlords for 30 years, and currently have two rental homes in Eugene. We rent them out as affordable, family 3- bedroom homes. We've always kept the rents low and raise the rent only every three years or so. The rents we charge have consistently been at least 30% under "market" values of comparable homes in the area. Also, we are responsible landlords and respond right away to any maintenance issue or other problem. We've never had tenant complaints. But imposing such huge costs on us to terminate a tenancy will definitely dampen our enthusiasm for providing affordable rents.

Your proposed rule changes to landlord law could even drive us out of business. We cannot afford to pay someone three months rent if we have to terminate their tenancy, like in order to make renovations or updates to make the house safer. For example, we're now getting \$1500 a month for a 3 bedroom 2 bathroom house and we'd be forced to pay 3 months of "Market" rates, which could be \$6000 to \$7000. If so, we may not be able to afford to start a project to repair the house, which older homes like ours do need periodically.

If we can't reasonably update our rental home then it will continue to fall into disrepair, thereby losing value as well as making it far less desirable as a place to rent. It will also lower the value of other homes in the neighborhood.

To avoid such costs, some people might take the rental off the market and convert it into an AirBNB or just sell it. Big corporations, private equity firms, and out-of-state investors are buying up rental properties by the hundreds, and have led the charge to jack up rents to the max. They are the ones who are destroying any chance of affordable rentals for the families who need it. And you are playing right into their hands, by tying ours, as small landlords who are trying to do the right thing.

Right now we have plans to build a small one-bedroom unit as an affordable accessory dwelling on our rental property. One bedroom places are much needed in the community and are very hard to find. We've already paid the architect to design it, but with these proposed rule changes, now we're having to re-evaluate before we go ahead and pay the City thousands of dollars in Permit fees and Service Development Charges to start the process of building an affordable one bedroom place for someone who needs it, perhaps a single parent or a couple trying to get a start in life.

Why are you making it so difficult for small landlords like us? Why should we use up our savings and go into debt to build an affordable rental for someone, if we're going to continually be treated like we're some sort of evil doers? Save those rules for the out-of-state investors and the private equity firms, not us.

And regarding the proposed new requirements for landlords to report various landlord-tenant activity, does the city really have the staff to start monitoring landlords like some kind of Big Brother? Should we also report when a tenant stops paying rent, or burns the new kitchen floor, or gets a pet without permission?

Such proposed changes to landlord law seriously erodes faith in city government, that you are considering the best interests of all city residents and not just those of renters and big investors.

Sincerely,



Lee and Margaret Boutell

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