

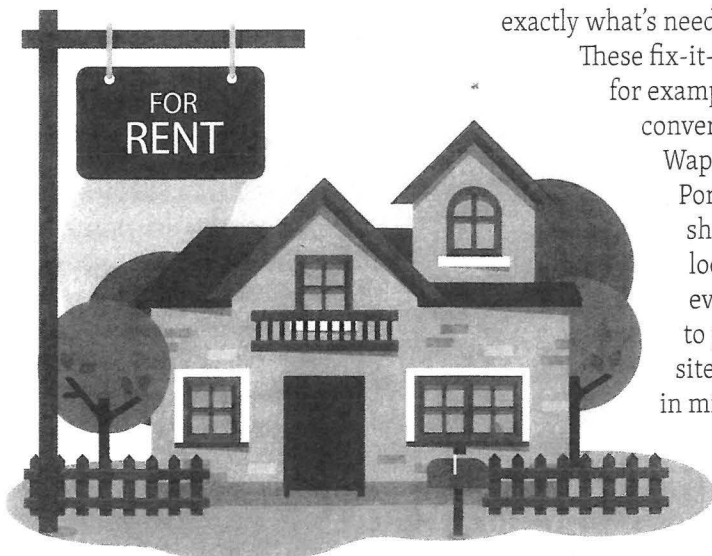
Turn the tide

By LEW CHURCH

WILL THE LEGISLATURE FINALLY DO SOMETHING ABOUT RENT CONTROL?

Many senior, disabled and low-income tenants throughout Oregon are looking forward with hope to the spring legislative session in Salem. Many of us feel this is the year that our Oregon Legislature finally overturns the pre-emption law against local cities legalizing rent control.

In view of the skyrocketing rents faced by tenants throughout our state, Oregon Gray Panthers is happy to support efforts by some state legislators to finally allow Oregon cities to join others like San Francisco, New York City and even Berlin — by legalizing the ability of cities to create rent control laws that enable rent stabilization and work to stem the rising tide of homelessness in our communities. We want to keep thousands of Oregonians in their homes, not on the streets.



Turn the tide

Gray Panther organizers held several meetings in Portland last year where tenant after tenant expressed the same demand for immediate rent control. Gray Panther organizers have pledged to fan out throughout Oregon, assisting tenants who support rent control, and to advocate for tenants who seek to hold their landlords, both for- and non-profit, accountable for needed repairs and maintenance, as well as treating tenants with respect, free from harassment or retaliation.

The housing crisis

In Oregon, senior and disabled housing advocates and organizers have witnessed a longstanding civil war of sorts between large nonprofit landlords (government housing agencies) and some politicians. While many believe that the housing crisis is a national problem that has been brewing for years and cannot be solved overnight, others maintain that quick fixes are exactly what's needed.

These fix-it-now proponents, for example, championed converting the never-used Wapato jail site in north Portland to a homeless shelter location. One local business person even spent \$5 million to purchase the Wapato site, with demolition in mind to make way for a warehouse if local government officials did not support the

Wapato/homeless shelter option.

Aggressive local governments

Gray Panthers believe there are plentiful resources and funding available to solve the housing crisis. Aggressive local governments might utilize eminent domain statutes to utilize empty buildings since many cities on the West Coast, like Portland, have declared housing emergencies. For years, regular folks have been priced out of housing via foreclosures and skyrocketing rent hikes.

Do we see the housing crisis as a real problem, or simply the basis for talking points on either side of the housing debate?

The so-called shock-and-awe of a booming economy seems to leave out those people deemed to be marginal or somehow sketchy. These folks can include: disabled seniors, single moms trying to provide for their kids, immigrants fleeing violence (with or without legal status), non-native English speakers, or Anglo workers who have worked hard at multiple jobs only to see their families out on the streets.

The whims of market economics and landlord speculation — economically and politically — simply disenfranchise vast swaths of people in our communities.

Oregon Gray Panthers maintains that rent control is an essential element of real democracy — that is, economic democracy. ✽

(Lew Church is coordinator of Oregon Gray Panthers and can be reached at POB40011@juno.com or 503-222-2974.)

**PORTLAND CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION REQUEST
Wednesday Council Meeting 9:30 AM**

Council Meeting Date: 3-13-19

Today's Date 1-2-19

Name Lew Church

Address PO Box 40011, Portland, Oregon 97240

Telephone 503-222-2974 Email POB40011@juno.com

Reason for the request:

PORTLAND GRAY PANTHERS

Lew Church
(signed)

- Give your request in writing to the Council Clerk's office to schedule a date for your Communication. Use this form or email the information to the Council Clerk at the email address below.
- You will be placed on the Wednesday official Council Agenda as a "Communication." Communications are the first item on the Agenda and are taken at 9:30 a.m. A total of five Communications may be scheduled. Individuals must schedule their own Communication.
- You will have 3 minutes to speak and may also submit written testimony before or at the meeting. Communications allow the Council to hear issues that interest our citizens, but do not allow an opportunity for dialogue.

Thank you for being an active participant in your City government.

Contact Information:

Karla Moore-Love, City Council Clerk
1221 SW 4th Ave, Room 130
Portland, OR 97204-1900
(503) 823-4086
email:
Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov

Sue Parsons, Assistant Council Clerk
1221 SW 4th Ave., Room 130
Portland, OR 97204-1900
(503) 823-4085
email:
Susan.Parsons@portlandoregon.gov

Request of Lew Church to address Council regarding
Portland Gray Panthers (Communication)

MAR 13 2019

PLACED ON FILE

Filed MAR 05 2019
MARY HULL CABALLERO
Auditor of the City of Portland

By  Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED
AS FOLLOWS:

	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Hardesty		
4. Eudaly		
Wheeler		