

RSC 2023 Listening Session Review

Public Testimony Statistics

Of Individuals who registered for the event: 119

- 62 individuals indicated they wanted to provide testimony when they registered
 - 26 indicated 'Yes' and 36 indicated 'Maybe'

Of individuals called upon to testify: 68

Total who provided public testimony: 19

- 7 provided testimony in person
- 12 provided testimony virtually

Note: 24 individuals testified at the 2022 RSC Listening Session

Speaker Representation:

- Landlord advocate: 9
- Tenant advocate: 9

Written Testimony Statistics

Total who provided written testimony: 17

Note: 13 individuals testified at the 2022 RSC Listening Session

Speaker Representation:

- Landlord advocate: 13
- Tenant advocate: 4

Testimony Themes

Organized by prevalence

Barriers Experienced by Landlords

A majority of the landlord advocates who testified indicated that the complexity of Portland's tenant protection laws have created barriers to providing affordable rental housing in the City of Portland.

Specific reasons cited include:

- The complexity of local Portland City Code vs. State Law
- A feeling of being vilified by the public
- The difficulty associated with the eviction process
- Tenant protections enacted by the FAIR Ordinance
- Confusion around ever-changing laws
- Bureaucratic obstacles
- A lengthy and non-transparent permitting process

Landlords indicated that these regulatory barriers make it more difficult to build and maintain housing in the City of Portland, causing many to sell their properties or outsource to a property management company, resulting in the replacement of mom-and-pop landlords with corporate entities.

Proposed solutions include: 1.) Revising the FAIR ordinance, 2.) revamping the permitting process to allow for easier development, 3.) reevaluating inclusionary zoning, and 4.) holding local leaders accountable for funding rent assistance.

More Support for Tenants is Needed

Suggestions for additional support/protections for tenants included:

- Offering a grace period at the beginning of the lease to allow a tenant to back out without penalty
- Increase the supply of affordable housing
- Increase access to behavioral health services
- Incentive 'second chance landlords' who offer trauma-informed care and reduce barriers to housing
- Fully fund an Eviction Legal Defense Program
- Enact rent stabilization legislation
- Fully fund rent assistance programs
- Subsidize the cost of housing applications
- Forbid landlord harassment

Landlord Education

Multiple members of the public highlighted the need for more landlord education courses, with topics centered not only on landlord/tenant law, but also how to provide affordable housing, provide resources to tenants, and assist with the affordable housing application.

Coordinate Efforts Between Landlords and Tenants

Several individuals mentioned the importance of landlord/tenant cooperation in addressing the current housing crisis.

Increase the Presence of Landlord Advocates on the RSC

This was mentioned by 3 individuals.

Next Steps

- Provide this document to the full RSC
- Read written testimony at future meetings
- Host a discussion at the **July 18th** RSC meeting to review themes and alter workplan where appropriate