



**Commissioner Nick Fish**  
City of Portland

March 7, 2018

## **Commissioner Fish's Statement on Permanent Renter Relocation Assistance**

Thank you.

I believe that housing is a human right.

But a safe, affordable place to live is becoming increasingly out of reach for too many Portlanders.

In October of 2015, Council recognized the magnitude of this crisis in our community and declared a housing state of emergency.

Since then, we have taken a number of steps to help Portlanders who are struggling to keep up with rising rents and the shortage of affordable housing.

- We successfully lobbied the State Legislature to give us new tools like Inclusionary Housing, which requires affordable apartments when new buildings are developed.
- We worked with the community to pass a \$250 million housing bond to fund new affordable homes across our community.
- We created the City-County Joint Office of Homeless Services to streamline programs and services for our most vulnerable, and committed record funding to their work.
- We pledged to bring 2,000 new units of supportive housing – deeply affordable homes with services for people living outside and struggling with severe medical, mental health, and addiction challenges – to our community over the next ten years.
- We welcomed new partners to the table to help us craft new solutions.

- And today, we are making a successful new program permanent, protecting Portland renters from ‘economic eviction.’

I’m pleased that we’ve been able to work through some complex issues and arrive at a consensus policy that will, after today, become permanent City law.

There’s no shortage of anxiety and uncertainty in the world and in our community right now.

Portland tenants shouldn’t have to worry whether they’re going to come home to notice of a 20% rent increase. Or whether their child is going to have to change schools and start over somewhere new mid-year. Whether they’ll have to choose between groceries or medicine. Or whether they’ll be able to keep a roof over their family’s head.

The market forces at work here are too big for any local government to contain, but we have an obligation to step up and lead in ways that we can.

Today, we are doing just that.

Thank you, Commissioner Eudaly and Mayor Wheeler, for your leadership and partnership on this issue.

Thanks to all the tenants who have shared their stories with us.

And thanks to the community for pushing us to act.

Aye.