

Hi Autumn,

Thank you for providing this means of offering testimony. My concern is H.772.

To the House Committee on Appropriations:

I am a renter in Brattleboro. I am currently seeking new housing because my landlord died and his will directed his heirs to sell his houses and donate the proceeds to a non-profit.

This bill does not address a personal problem at this time. Nevertheless I am and always have been keenly interested in rental housing. I have only rented in my life. I am living largely on Social Security. Rental rates are crushing.

I am not a sufficiently skilled reader of legislation jargon and may not have understood everything I've read.

1) Sec 4461 reads that a landlord can require, in effect, three months in advance to move in. I strongly advocate for limiting rental front money to two months of rent equivalency. This was achieved in Brattleboro several years ago through an ordinance. Some landlords objected. But, to this point there is no evidence of adverse effects. Rents are often running to \$2,500/mo. Three months (\$7,500) to move in is out of reach of a huge segment of the population. Advances beyond one month are really just an unnoticeable means by which a landlord increases profit. A tenant paying two months occupancy above the first month rent, using \$2,500 again, is placing \$5,000 in a landlord's account. A landlord with 20 units has \$100,000 collecting interest for them. Some landlords assert that they have had tenants that caused more damage than a security deposit covered. On very rare occasions that does happen. On the other hand landlords have insurance that covers most of that.

2) require landlords to pay annual interest on upfront money above the first month's rent. A simple way to handle this is for a landlord to create a savings account identified with the tenant so the tenant can see an annual statement. When the rental relationship ends the landlord returns the full amount in the account. This would not affect allowable reductions such as undue damage.

3) landlords be required to provide a copy of this enacted legislation to a tenant signing a rental agreement for six months or longer. To assume that a tenant, particularly those renting for the first time, out of state or foreign born, will know that they need to go to an obscure location (the CVOEO) to learn their rights is not likely to be effective means for building an understanding between landlord and tenant. A copy could be required to be hung, like inspection certificates, in rental units. I presume the CVOEO is directed to freely provide any information pertaining to landlord/tenant agreements or, in general, all pertinent state statutes.

Thank you very much for you attention and considerations.

Sincerely, Spoon Agave

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