

**TESTIMONY
CASEY EDWARDS
PRESIDENT
CONNECTICUT RENTAL HOUSING ALLIANCE (CRHA)
BEFORE THE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
MARCH 3, 2006**

RE: SUPPORT FOR SB-361, An Act Concerning Possessions and Personal Effects of Tenants Evicted from Residential Property.

The Connecticut Rental Housing Alliance (CRHA), the largest organization representing multi-family property owners throughout Connecticut, respectfully submits the following comments in **support of SB-361, An Act Concerning Possessions and Personal Effects of Tenants Evicted from Residential Property.**

SB-361 will help responsible rental property owners continue to provide affordable rental housing stock to Connecticut residents by addressing a long-standing problem that has become increasingly costly for both rental property owners and municipalities. The problem involves the cost of removing, storing and disposing an evicted tenant's possessions.

In an eviction case, rental property owners are already on the hook for litigation costs, lost rent and, often times, property damages. Under current law, rental property owners must also pay for the cost of removing an evicted tenant's possessions from the unit and storage areas. This can cost from \$300 to \$1000 depending on the area and the amount of belongings. Most of these items are worthless which is why the tenant didn't bother to take them. It is important to note that these costs to the rental property owner are in addition to the several months of lost rent and legal and court costs.

The municipality is now required to store these items, at considerable cost. This is unfair particularly in view of statistics that indicate that more than 90% of all evictions are for non-payment of rent.

S.B. 361 corrects this situation by requiring that such possessions and personal effects shall immediately be removed by the evicted tenant. The tenant who has been evicted has already received months of notice that they would have to vacate the premises and remove their belongings. That is ample time to arrange for a place to store these items. This bill appropriately clarifies that the evicted tenant is responsible for removing the possessions. By addressing this issue, SB-361 will make it a little bit easier for rental property owners to continue to provide individuals with affordable rents and encourage investment in rental properties across the board.

We urge lawmakers to support SB-361, which will help rental property owners, responsible tenants and the overall economy by encouraging investment in rental properties.