

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
COMMITTEE BILL NO 591  
ACT CONCERNING PERSONAL PROPERTY OF EVICTED TENANT

Under the current statutory scheme the City of Bridgeport is mandated to remove and store evicted tenants personal property for fourteen days. Each year the City of Bridgeport is mandated to use its personnel, vehicles, fuel, and make use of City buildings for storage and incur pest infestations without receiving any remuneration for the performance of this service.

The cost to the City of Bridgeport is very onerous. Each year the City of Bridgeport handles a minimum of 500 to 600 evictions at a cost in excess of \$400,000. Each year the City of Bridgeport disposes of 90% of evicted tenants personal effects by having them carted to the solid waste facility and incurs a tipping fee. Only 1% of the personal effects are sold at public sale and the costs of publication are seldom recovered.

Municipalities should be relieved of this burden as it is truly not a public service but is a service gratuitously granted to a narrow class of individuals that is being borne by the entire taxpaying populace. The burden and expense of the eviction and storage of a tenant's personal property should be born by the person or persons deriving the contract for economic benefit or namely the landlords.

Moreover, the landlords in the City of Bridgeport have been generally dissatisfied with the service provided by City personnel. The landlords demand faster and more timely service than can be provided by the municipality. State Marshal's who perform the eviction service for the landlords routinely make requests upon the municipality that cannot be accommodated as the resources devoted are continuously stretched to their breaking point. Sometimes landlords need to wait 30 days to receive the mandated statutory service but nowhere in the current legislation does it give the landlord or the municipality a timetable to accomplish their respective tasks. In the past year there have been threats by State Marshals to evict even if a City vehicle was not available and there have been threats to have State Marshals prosecuted for illegal dumping if they perform an eviction without a City vehicle being available.

The proposed change via this bill would extricate municipalities from this timely, expensive and truly private task. Moreover, the landlord who is seeking quicker service and who is the beneficiary of eviction process would bear the expense. The landlord would have the duty to safeguard the tenant's property for the statutory period and would have liability for improperly disposing of tenant's personal property. The balance of power and the duty of landlord and tenant would only be extended for an additional fourteen-day period.

Today, short-term public storage facilities exist in abundance to manage and safeguard the personal property of a tenant and a tenant must only go and pay the storage bill to the public storage company to retrieve their property. The tenant need not even confront the landlord regarding the retrieval of their personal property. The day of the Municipality

being required to perform this service and act as a buffer between landlord and tenant is now an obsolete notion.

For all of the reasons set forth in this memo it is urged by the City of Bridgeport that the pending bill be passed in its current form.