

CT Property Owners Alliance Inc.

161 North Main ST
Waterbury CT 06702
1-800-369-6153
WWW.CTPOA.COM

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My name is Robert DeCosmo; I am the president of the CT Property Owners Alliance with chapters in several of Connecticut's urban centers. One of our goals is to maintain and preserve affordable housing and we see a challenge to this goal on your agenda today.

We strongly oppose section #6 of agenda item #7, HB 5035 AN ACT REDUCING MANDATES FOR MUNICIPALITIES. Specifically, we strongly oppose the shift of the expense of storing evicted tenants possessions from the cities onto the property owner who brought about the eviction action.

Briefly, 2 years ago, the legislature shifted the transportation costs of evicted tenant's possessions from the cities to the landlord in an eviction. Testimony was given and assurances made that this expense was relatively minor...that did not turn out to be true. The expense is now a major cost increases with many Attorneys being told they need to retain \$1,500 to secure the moving truck for the execution.

I received an invoice from a distraught Waterbury condo owner for \$1,882 for moving costs, making her legal fees nearly \$3,000 for a one eviction. When combined with lost rent, repairs and re-leasing fees, losses to an owner now approach \$7,000; hardly a way to maintain and preserve affordable housing.

We request that section #6 of the HB 5035 be removed and language updating the entire post judgment process be substituted. The new process should require;

- 1 Tenants wishing to keep their possessions must notify the cities they need to store their possessions and to bring them to the city facility at their own expense and prior to the execution expiration.
- 2 Upon expiration of the execution, all items left behind shall be considered abandoned and the owner may dispose of these items in any legal fashion.

Eviction statistics suggest that only a minority number of cases require a moving truck and in 80% of these cases, tenants never reclaim the items the city stores. The cities have difficulty recovering their costs because in these unclaimed cases we are moving and storing junk.

Changing this proposal as suggested helps in a number of ways;

- 1 Provides mandate relief to the city as 80% of its burden is relieved, in the other 20%, the tenant redeems their possessions and the city's costs will be reimbursed.
- 2 Relieves the property owners of this staggering extra cost
- 3 Protects tenants who need time to locate a new apartment
- 4 Stops a growing trend of owners paying cash for keys as an alternative to a legal eviction

The CT Property Owners Alliance is willing to help shape this policy with any committee willing to work on solving this dilemma; I thank you for your time today.