



## Connecticut Property Owners Alliance, Inc

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I am Robert De Cosmo, president of the CT Property Owners Alliance. One of our goals at CTPOA is to maintain and preserve affordable housing; we see an opportunity to help achieve this goal today.

We support **HB 5295 AN ACT CONCERNING THE POSSESSIONS OF EVICTED TENANTS**

When the legislature shifted the transpiration costs of evicted tenant's possessions from the city to the owner, assurances were made that this was a relatively minor expense increase, which is not the case. This expense is a significant cost increase to the taxpaying property owner and shifting the city's storage fees to owners could prove disastrous so we look for the tenant to step up and be held accountable.

Lost rent, legal fees, unit repairs and re-leasing fees approach \$7,000 in CT for a typical eviction; clearly something needs to be done to help the taxpaying owner. One simple improvement could be to have the tenant reimburse the owner for his costs in the moving process when the tenant redeems their items and give the marshals a broader standard to decide the items left behind are abandoned.

Clearly, the landlord and city need to be out of the expense side of the evicted tenant possession equation because the statutes clearly hold the tenant responsible for costs. Worse, we throw away the stored tenants items almost 80% of the time as evidenced in previous studies on this subject. The CTPOA would like to see a new procedure whereas;

1. All eviction paperwork is updated to notify the tenants they are responsible for moving their items and possessions by the expiration of the judgment or they will be considered abandoned
2. Tenants wishing to keep their possessions must notify the cities they need to store their belongings and will bring them to the city facility at their own expense prior to the judgment expiration.
3. Upon expiration of the judgment, 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 rental furniture or junk.

Changing this evicted tenant's storage statutes as suggested above helps in a number of ways;

- Provides mandate relief to the city as ~80% of tenants never reclaim these items
- Relieves the property owners of unfairly paying for someone else's expense
- Protects tenants who need time to locate a new apartment and must have temporary storage as long as they notify the city they want to pay and intend to redeem their items
- Stops a dangerous trend of owners giving cash for keys as an alternative to a legal eviction

The CT Property Owners Alliance is willing to help refine a policy with your committee and participate in any panel on this subject to solve the dilemma on how to equitably deal with evicted tenants possessions.