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Testimony for Raised Bill:

Raised Bill No. 6759 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF LANDLORDS AND TENANTS REGARDING THE TREATMENT OF BED BUG INFESTATIONS

The Connecticut Apartment Association (CTAA) represents over 35,000 rental units; the largest number of apartments represented by any multifamily housing association in the state. CTAA members consist of the state's leading firms in the multifamily rental housing industry. The association's mission is to provide quality rental housing to residents of Connecticut. Our parent organization, the National Apartment Association (NAA), represents more than 7 million apartment homes throughout the United States and Canada. The CTAA applauds the efforts of the Housing Committee to develop a bill that would comprehensively address the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants when bed bug infestations occur. While we are pleased to see that you have taken into consideration several issues raised by our association in previous testimony on this issue, we are troubled by certain provisions of the proposed legislation.

We are opposed to the amount of time given to the landlord to become aware of the bed bug problem in said residence and time given to address the issue.

Section 6 (b) (1) states in part:

A tenant shall promptly notify a landlord orally or in writing when the tenant knows or reasonably suspects that the tenant's dwelling unit is infested with bed bugs. Not later than five business days after receiving such notice, the landlord shall obtain an inspection by a qualified inspector of the dwelling unit and any contiguous unit of which the landlord is an owner, lessor or sublessor, and may enter any such dwelling unit or contiguous unit for the purpose of conducting such inspection as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection. If the qualified inspector determines that any such dwelling unit or contiguous unit is infested with bed bugs, the landlord shall, not later than five business days after the date of the inspection, take reasonable measures, as determined by such qualified inspector, to effectively treat the bed bug infestation, including treating or retaining the services of a pest control agent to treat the dwelling unit and any contiguous unit of which the landlord is an owner, lessor or sublessor, except the landlord may first attempt to treat such infestation. If the landlord treats such bed bug infestation without retaining the services of a pest control agent, the landlord shall first vacuum the areas to be treated and shall, not later than five business days after the date of such treatment, obtain an inspection of any treated unit by a qualified inspector. If the qualified inspector determines that any such unit is not infested with bed bugs, the qualified inspector shall provide the landlord with a written certification of such determination. If the qualified inspector determines that any such unit is infested with bed bugs, the landlord shall, not later than five business days after the date of such inspection, retain the services of a pest control agent. Except as otherwise provided in this section, the landlord shall be responsible for all costs associated with inspection for and treatment of a bed bug infestation.

The members of the Connecticut Apartment Association (CTAA) are also highly opposed to the formation of a task force to “develop and publish best practices and guidelines that identify the most effective and least burdensome methods of investigating and treating bed bug infestations.”

This is an appropriations issue and we would need further clarification as to who would be fiscally responsible for this.

As this legislation moves forward, members of the CTAA are happy to make themselves available to your committee for further information on bed bug infestations in rental housing. We thank you for your time and your work on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Jessica Olander
Executive Director
Connecticut Apartment Association