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From: Freeman & Co. <freemancoct@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 17, 2020 9:37 PM
To: HSGTestimony
Subject: Urgent - for Tuesday Hearing on 2/18/2020

My name is Naomi Freeman and I am a real estate consultant and property manager here in Connecticut.

As a descendant of the people on the Mayflower that came to this country back in 1620 and many key families involved in the creation of this great nation including the Hales from which celebrated Nathan Hale is also from as well as many others, I was surprised to see the below bills being presented for tomorrow. The bills are below:

SB 105, SB 109, HB 5122, HB 5123, HB 5126 and HB 5118.

Though I would hope that the presenters of these bills have the best intentions in mind, they clearly are not familiar enough with real estate to understand the intense damage they are creating for the tenants.

Additionally, they are forcing housing providers to become slaves. I understand that this is a strong word, however, you have to realize what the definition of slave is. See the many definitions below that demonstrate my point:

Slavery is any system in which principles of property law are applied to people, allowing individuals to own, buy and sell other individuals, as a de jure form of property.^[1] **A slave is unable to withdraw unilaterally from such an arrangement and works without remuneration.** Many scholars now use the term chattel slavery to refer to this specific sense of legalized, *de jure* slavery. In a broader sense, however, **the word slavery may also refer to any situation in which an individual is *de facto* forced to work against their own will.** Scholars also use the more generic terms such as unfree labour or forced labour to refer to such situations.^[2] However, and especially under slavery in broader senses of the word, slaves may have some rights and protections according to laws or customs.

Let's continue on.

SB 105: Tenant's right to housing. I love the idea of everyone having housing, however, this should not be on the backs of the private sector. Forcing the private sector to provide housing with out remuneration is slavery. The housing provider has staggering costs that the proposer of this bill has not understood. From incredibly high taxes to insurance, to maintenance, to misc fees, to mortgages, to the water bills, to the sewer bills, etc.... when a tenant does not pay, none of these companies will allow the housing provider to not pay. Rather than pouring Millions of hard earned tax payer Dollars into attorneys to further enslave and cripple housing providers, why aren't these funds being used to educate the non-paying tenants so they can actually get on their own two feet to pay for themselves and their families. Or second best, give the funds to the housing providers to pay the rent for the time that the non-paying tenants are there until they find a different place.

Evicting a tenant is already extremely costly and due to the current legislation in CT where it takes so long, it does not allow for any hesitation. Prolonging the eviction process as this bill proposes, will only extrapolate the issue and make housing providers even more terrified to rent to the wrong person, thus intensifying the background screening even more.

There a million and one better ways to handle this situation and the approach to this situation is the worst.

SB 109: Concealing criminal records. This is extremely dangerous to both tenants and housing providers. Housing providers have died due to dangerous tenants. It also places good tenants at tremendous risk. Additionally, should a tenant cause damage, the landlord is liable. However, this bill is forcing a housing providers to put their tenants, the neighborhood, their family, their employees, and everyone that has to be around them at risk. I have extensive experience with this and can tell you many many examples of how removing one problem tenant that had a criminal record brought safety, order and peace back into a neighborhood.

I have had tenants begging and pleading with tears rolling down their cheeks to please remove high risk tenants from a building, however, due to the long eviction process, it dragged out, putting the lives of my tenants, my workers and myself at risk for months on end.

I understand that some people who do have records are completely harmless, however, with the involved risks it is slavery to force a housing provider to subject his tenants, the neighborhood and everyone surrounding the person to risk of their lives and well being if they do not feel comfortable with it.

HB 5122 - Civil Rights protections to criminals. This is in the same category as the SB 109 bill and extremely dangerous. Again, people with a criminal record are not for the private sector and should not be forced onto the private sector. It is an invasion of lives, well-being, and so much more.

The challenges that you are dealing with comes from a heavily broken corrections system. Forcing the private sector to take on the damaged product of that system is violation and invasion of the safety of the private sector.

HB 5123 - Strict liability for housing providers where children have elevated lead levels. - Again forcing the private sector to take on the errors of the federal government that heavily promoted lead paint for decades despite reports that showed how utterly dangerous lead is.

Furthermore, evidence has shown that lead comes from a multitude of sources. Not just paint that has been replaced over 40 years ago now.

A huge culprit of lead was actually from gasoline that so drenched our society it lays even now in the very dirt, the air. Not to mention other additional sources of lead, toys from overseas for example are known to also be a source. Not to mention so many other factors that play into this scenario. Yet, government pins it all on lead paint?

Housing providers are again the whipping boy, the slave who is falsely accused and discriminated against for simply for being a housing provider.

HB 5126 - The severe micro-managing of housing providers leads not only to additional costs for the government, encourages the stripping of the independence of business owners and additionally, the bill lacks the wisdom

of the actual reality of renting. For example, it says that an inspection should be done at least one week prior to the tenant leaving. The challenge is that on many occasions, tenants have hidden damage under a throw rug, behind a bookcase, etc... there are many things in this bill that lack the wisdom that comes from actually being in the field of providing housing.

HB 5118 - This is in the same category as the SB 109 bill and HB 5122 and extremely dangerous. additionally, landlords should not even be forced to be put into the situation where security systems should be mandated due to criminals being forced upon the private sector.

Imagine there is a horse that has a history of hurting people. So the government put the horse in time out with all the other dangerous horses for a while and then when the horse was released, the government forced horse drivers to take the horse with the history of hurting people to give rides to people in central park. However, should the horse hurt anyone, the driver had to install a video camera for security, yet still, should the horse hurt anyone, in any way, the horse driver was still liable.

Just as the above scenario is wrong, immoral and completely unconscionable, the bills above are also wrong, immoral and completely unconscionable.

Overall, the above bills are strong drivers to modern day feudalism, making it so difficult and dangerous for the regular American to achieve the American dream of being business owners, that continuing on this trajectory, only very strong and powerful companies will be able to afford to provide housing for free, however, even if they provide housing for free for unpaying tenants, it still does not remove the dangers of forcing housing providers to take in people with criminal backgrounds that they do not feel comfortable with, nor does it remove the immoral ideas of creating slaves out of housing providers. This bill is a violation of human rights.

With everything that America stands for and is built upon, I am shocked and saddened that such bills stripping housing providers and their tenants of protection and liberties that were so hard earned through the blood, sweat and tears of so many. Are we so willing to throw it away?

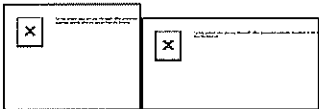
I understand that there are certainly challenges and issues in regards to both tenants not paying rent and/or people with criminal records not being able to find housing.

However, to force with out consent upon housing providers in the private sector the proposed "solution" to the government's economic and correctional system's woes is not even a mere band aid on oozing infected sores, but actually aggravates the infection making it so bad, it goes gangrene.

The interesting thing is that the private sector of housing providers very likely can help with the challenges faced in placing high risk tenants, however, it is through mutual collaboration and cooperation - not the government forcing itself upon housing providers with out consent.

Kind Regards,

Naomi Freeman



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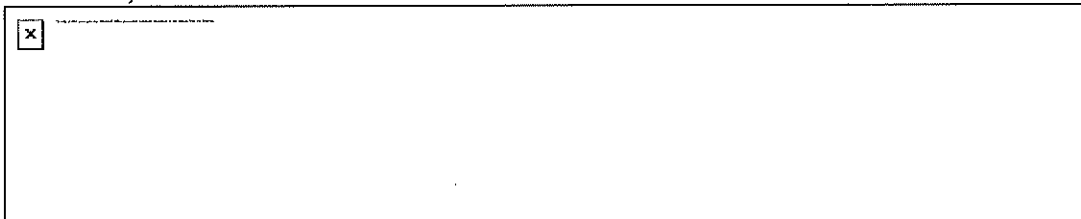
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