

Dear CT State Legislature,

I am a small business here in CT. I have been a property owner and landlord for almost 30 years. I have two employees and try very hard to provide them with jobs, and to provide quality safe housing for the people who rent from me. Over the years I have had to deal with many abuses by my tenants. The majority of the time the tenants get away with abuses such as not paying rent, damaging apartments, making false claims, and expertly taking advantage of the legal system here in CT. During my time as a landlord it has become evident that the laws here do not represent a fair playing field for tenants and landlords. The laws are written in a very biased way that favor the tenants. I would love to see fair housing laws that were actually fair, and not written with the intention of giving unfair advantages to renters.

The following proposals are extremely worrisome from the standpoint of being able to continue doing business in CT.

SB 105 - Tenant's Right To Housing

If a tenant is to be provided with free legal council (whether they have a financial need or not), it would only be fair to provide landlords with free legal council as well. Again, I am not a big conglomerate or even a wealthy person, just a small business owner who knows that career bad tenants will take advantage of the system and the free legal council. There will be no hesitation to unjustly accuse or sue their landlords. What will they have to lose ?

SB 109 - Concealing criminal records

this bill is particularly troubling. I am legally responsible for the safety of all of my renters in my rental property. If I have a young family with small children and I rent to a convicted child molester and there is sexual abuse I will be sued as I am the one who vetted and rented to the child molester. The same for drug dealers and the potential for lots of other problems from convicted criminals. I am not 100% against renting to someone with a criminal record, but I have the right (currently) to know who I am renting to. My business depends on my ability to properly vet applicants.

HB 5123 - Strict liability for lead poisonings

With the vast majority of rental housing being built before 1978 it is unfair to put the responsibility of lead poisoning on landlords. All the landlords that I know are good hard working people, not people who don't care and who don't do what is required of them to provide good safe clean housing. The majority of cases involving lead poisoning in apartments come from the occupants not cleaning their apartments regularly or doing a good job cleaning. Dust with lead is a problem that can only be solved with a responsible renter who cleans.

HB 5126 - Capping late fees

I try to be a sensible landlord and realize that there could be genuine reasons why someone can not pay their rent on time for a particular month. However, I have many tenants who make a lot of money (probably more than me) and who have the ability to pay their rent on time but who choose not to. Many tenants assume that because their rent is not legally late until the 10th, that that is when it is due. As my mortgage and virtually all my other bills are due on the first of the month it hurts me when I cannot pay my bills because I have not received the rent. Tenants need incentive to pay on time. Please do not cap late fees

HB 5118 - Security Systems

landlords should not be required to install and maintain security systems. This would just be one more burden for struggling landlords, the initial cost and then again maintaining them. I personally have never had a situation where security cameras would have paid off. With the ability to do proper background and credit checks security systems are not at all necessary.

I beg you to consider these points and also the fact that the more landlords are regulated and the more tenants are empowered, the harder it is for small businesses like myself to succeed and to stay in business. If all these proposals are voted into law, landlords are going to have insurmountable challenges ahead. The State will see more and more business owner moving away to more business friendly States and to States without such burdensome regulation. The laws in CT are already skewed in favor of the renter, please do not make the playing field even more unfair.

Thank you for your consideration,

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