

Aging Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5206

AN ACT CONCERNING THE RENTERS' REBATE PROGRAM FOR SENIOR
Title: CITIZENS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

Vote Date: 3/3/2020

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/27/2020

File No.:

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

SPONSORS OF BILL: Aging Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The Renters Rebate Program provides annual assistance for rent and utilities for seniors under a certain income and those who are disabled. Seniors have missed or nearly missed deadlines for renters' rebate because of delay of receiving a notarized verification from their landlord. The notarized form is to prevent fraud and while this is a critical step, tenants who have lived at the same address the previous year may experience delays in receiving notarized verification and then declined renter's assistance.

This bill would:

- 1.) Exempt a renter from the notarization requirement if the address of the applicant has been verified by a landlord and previously notarized.
- 2.) Ensure that an application of a qualified renter is not delayed.
- 3.) Allows for extension of municipal deadlines due to medical reasons verified by a doctor.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Submitted

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Representative Al Paolillo, 97th Assembly District: He submitted testimony that many residents in Bella Vista, a senior living community, have experienced confusion and have missed or nearly missed sensitive deadlines for the renter's rebate program. Constituents have missed due to medical issues. Others have missed due to short deadlines from the

application to notification of notarization process. Simplifying the renters rebate application process would help seniors and those who are disabled to pay for their heat and rent.

Kevin Brophy, Managing Director of Elder Law, Connecticut Legal Services: He submitted testimony that this bill will make it easier for seniors to apply for renter's rebate.

Michelle Clary Butler, City of New Haven Elderly Services: She submitted testimony that many seniors can have a difficult time getting in touch with their landlord who may not be accessible or understand the imperativeness of a tenant to obtain the notarized statement. This delay results in denials of renter's rebate assistance.

Nicholas Colavolpe: He testified that in his experience he has found seniors are not given enough time to comply with notarization requirements.

Connecticut AARP: Testimony was submitted that it would make it easier for seniors to continue in the program and would make the deadline more flexible.

Kathleen Flaherty, Executive Director, Connecticut Legal Rights Project, Inc.: Testified that the state should eliminate the requirement for additional notarized verification if the senior or disabled tenant provided the prior year.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Submitted

Reported by: Gaia McDermott