



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 104

February Session, 2022

Substitute House Bill No. 5205

House of Representatives, March 23, 2022

The Committee on Housing reported through REP. WILLIAMS of the 100th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING FAIR RENT COMMISSIONS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 7-148b of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2022*):

3 (a) For purposes of this section and sections 7-148c to 7-148f,
4 inclusive, "seasonal basis" means housing accommodations rented for a
5 period or periods aggregating not more than one hundred twenty days
6 in any one calendar year and "rental charge" includes any fee or charge
7 in addition to rent that is imposed or sought to be imposed upon a
8 tenant by a landlord.

9 (b) [Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, any] Any
10 town, city or borough may, and any town, city or borough with a
11 population of twenty-five thousand or more, as determined by the most
12 recent decennial census, shall, through its legislative body, create a fair
13 rent commission. [to] Any such commission shall make studies and
14 investigations, conduct hearings and receive complaints relative to

15 rental charges on housing accommodations, except those
 16 accommodations rented on a seasonal basis, within its jurisdiction,
 17 which term shall include mobile manufactured homes and mobile
 18 manufactured home park lots, in order to control and eliminate
 19 excessive rental charges on such accommodations, and to carry out the
 20 provisions of sections 7-148b to 7-148f, inclusive, section 47a-20 and
 21 subsection (b) of section 47a-23c. The commission, for such purposes,
 22 may compel the attendance of persons at hearings, issue subpoenas and
 23 administer oaths, issue orders and continue, review, amend, terminate
 24 or suspend any of its orders and decisions. The commission may be
 25 empowered to retain legal counsel to advise it.

26 [(c) Any town, city or borough in which the number of renter-
 27 occupied dwelling units is greater than five thousand, as determined by
 28 the most recent decennial census, and which does not have a fair rent
 29 commission on October 1, 1989, shall, on or before June 1, 1990, conduct
 30 a public hearing or public hearings and decide by majority vote of its
 31 legislative body whether to create a fair rent commission as provided in
 32 subsection (a) of this section. Any such town, city or borough which fails
 33 to act pursuant to the requirements of this subsection shall, not later
 34 than June 1, 1991, create such fair rent commission.]

35 [(d)] (c) Any two or more towns, cities or boroughs not subject to the
 36 requirements of subsection [(c)] (b) of this section may, through their
 37 legislative bodies, create a joint fair rent commission.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2022	7-148b

HSG *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 23 \$	FY 24 \$
Various Municipalities	STATE MANDATE ¹ - Potential Cost	Potential	Potential

Explanation

The bill requires all municipalities with a population of over 25,000 to establish fair rent commissions. The bill also specifies that these commissions must conduct studies and investigations, and hold hearings.

A municipality that does not have the resources to conduct housing studies or investigations may incur staff or consulting costs to complete those responsibilities. Additionally, municipalities that hold public hearings on housing issues may incur costs related to police overtime to provide security at such hearings.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

¹ State mandate is defined in Sec. 2-32b(2) of the Connecticut General Statutes, "state mandate" means any state initiated constitutional, statutory or executive action that requires a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5205*****AN ACT CONCERNING FAIR RENT COMMISSIONS.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires all municipalities with a population of 25,000 or more to establish a fair rent commission (see BACKGROUND). (It does not specify a date by which these municipalities must do so.) Under the bill, municipalities' populations are determined by the U.S. Census Bureau's most recent decennial census (i.e., 2020).

The bill allows two or more municipalities, each with populations under 25,000, to create joint fair rent commissions through their legislative bodies.

It also eliminates a current provision that required certain municipalities to hold a public hearing on or before June 1, 1990, and decide by a majority vote of the municipal legislative body whether to create a fair rent commission. It applied to municipalities that had more than 5,000 renter-occupied dwelling units based on the 1980 decennial census but did not have a fair rent commission on October 1, 1989. Those municipalities that failed to do so were required to create a fair rent commission by June 1, 1991.

Finally, the bill makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2022

BACKGROUND***Fair Rent Commissions***

Current law allows the legislative body of any town, city, or borough (or certain combinations thereof) to create a fair rent commission in order to (1) control and eliminate excessive rental charges and (2) carry out certain landlord-tenant statutes. Specifically, commissions have the

power to:

1. conduct studies or investigations;
2. hold hearings;
3. receive rent complaints;
4. require people to appear at hearings;
5. issue subpoenas and administer oaths; and
6. issue, continue, review, amend, terminate, or suspend its orders and decisions.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Housing Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 11 Nay 4 (03/10/2022)