

# Housing Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-6781  
AN ACT ADDRESSING HOUSING AFFORDABILITY FOR RESIDENTS IN THE  
**Title:** STATE.  
**Vote Date:** 3/2/2023  
**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute  
**PH Date:** 2/28/2023  
**File No.:** 208

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## SPONSORS OF BILL:

Housing Committee  
Rep. Jason Rojas, 9<sup>th</sup> Dist.  
Rep. Maryam Khanna, 5<sup>th</sup> Dist.

## REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill seeks to remove unsafe and dangerous buildings normally available to renters, and to create a larger cap on fines that can be placed upon landlords when they are found in violation of their housing contracts or in violation of the law.

This would also create an updated and more comprehensive affordable housing program for landlords, zoning commissions, and renters through section 8-30g.

## RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None stated

## NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

**Connecticut Voices for Children, Dr. Samaila Adelaiye:** Dr, Adelaiye supports this bill stating that it will help municipalities enforce the housing codes and that raising the maximum fine for housing code violations from \$250 to \$2,000 will protect tenants and increase accountability for landlords who do not keep their properties in safe and sanitary conditions.

**Connecticut Resident, Antwan Haugabook:** Mr. Haugabook supports this bill stating that as a convicted felon with poor credit, it is unfair that he must pay application fees to a

landlord for an apartment whilst knowing that his application fee does not guarantee him housing acceptance.

**Connecticut Fair Housing Center, Dahlia Romanow:** Ms. Ramanow supports this bill stating that Section 11, which protects tenants from being denied rental housing based on eviction records, would alleviate the pressures in regards to eviction filings in Connecticut. He states a permanent public record is created as soon as a landlord starts an eviction court case. This record is electronically accessible to the public within a day of its filing and can permanently lower the chances that a renter's application for new housing will be approved; further, he states that this disproportionately affects people of color and women.

**The Arc of Connecticut, Director of Advocacy, Carol Scully:** Ms. Scully supports this bill stating that Connecticut's high cost of living makes it difficult for people with disabilities to afford housing, especially if they don't qualify for state waiver supports and or rely solely on Supplemental Social Security Income/Disability payments.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Eagle Rock Management, Utilities Coordinator, Lasha Amaghlobeli:** Lasha Amaghlobeli opposes this bill stating that there is a material negative impact to tax revenue on municipal, county and state levels when rental levels on apartment units are restricted. Rent rate control creates a stagnant market that limits the number of people that can find housing as prospective renters. Additionally, they claim that an increase in housing stock is the best solution to address housing affordability.

**Connecticut Resident, Annitta Ingraham:** Ms. Ingraham opposes this bill stating that lapse of time is needed to be able to remove tenants that no longer have a lease in place and that lapse of time essentially allows for a 'no fault' eviction.

**Connecticut Resident, Lin Yang:** Mr. Yang opposes this bill stating that to achieve housing affordability, the state needs to address the cost end of issues such as high property tax, heavy liability, and embezzlement of housing providers backed by state policy.

**Rental Property Owner, Robert Hinners:** Mr. Hinners submitted testimony opposing this bill stating that a fine of \$2,000.00 per day is unrealistic for a small property owner; further, he states that Time Lapse Elimination for landlords that own 5 or more units is an arbitrary number.

**Agent, Westley Klockner:** Mr. Klockner opposes this bill stating that an artificially created rent cap will adversely affect the housing market, as it does not follow the trends of the state economy. Mr. Klockner is claiming that the measure would stifle new construction and diminish the available housing stock which creates a supply/demand imbalance putting increased pressure on B and C class rents, further diminishing affordability. He further claims that rent control severely limits investment in affordable housing projects.

**L E Properties LLC, Manager, Eric Polinsky:** Mr. Polinsky submitted testimony in opposition of this bill stating that rent caps are an unconstitutional taking of property rights and that the free market should determine rent. Mr. Polinsky claims that property owners will

not be able to maintain their property if their rent is artificially controlled. He further states that an eviction moratorium is an invitation for tenants to avoid paying rent and that it is an unconstitutional taking of property, and property rights.

**Reported by: James Angelopoulos**

**Date: 3/23/2023**

