

On Mon, Feb 22, 2016 at 5:42 PM, Jeanne
<jeanne_michael@yahoo.com> wrote:

I am writing in support of this legislation. I own 3 multifamily buildings in Washington County. We have been troubled by tenants who falsify credentials in order to obtain housing then damage the apartments. We have had at least 6 eviction proceedings before the court in the past 3 years. It usually takes 6-9 months to remove a tenant for non-payment of rent, however, one case took just shy of 2 years.

With regard to the subject of withholding rent because of habitability issues: We have NEVER been notified by a tenant of any habitability issues prior to the delivery of a 14 day notice and frequently the issue is not brought up until they are in front of a judge. It has been our experience that the non-paying tenants actually damage the apartment in order to make a claim about habitability. Eliminating noticing requirements for entry to examine the damages and make repairs when an issue of habitability is claimed makes sense.

Additionally, as a landlord, I have been dismayed by the performance of the courts. The delays in calendaring eviction proceedings cause the rent balances due to the landlord to escalate incredibly. If the courts are unable to proceed in a timely manner, adding back rent to escrow payments would expedite the proceedings and help the landlord collect a small portion of what is due.

Please remember that most landlords are not giant corporations; they have invested in housing in the state of Vermont to enhance their retirements, put their children through college and to make a nominal income. It is expensive to own income property; mortgage, tax, insurance, and water and sewer payments are continuing and non-reducible expenses. If the property owners are unable to collect rent, their investment goals are crushed.

Please consider that the property owners must have some recourse to be able to continue to provide rental housing in Vermont.

Jeanne Michael
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