

March 20, 2023

Representative Thomas Stevens
Chair, House General and Housing Committee
12 Winooski Street
Waterbury, Vermont 05676-1808

Representative Stevens, Chair, and House General and Housing Committee:

I respectfully request that you pass Bill H.184 in the current legislative session

I live in Burlington and have owned a 4 unit property at 9-11 Crombie Street for approximately 32 years. I have been a diligent and caring landlord and have provided clean, safe apartment housing for hundreds of tenants over these years. I have had the building and the apartments painted numerous times, and have continuously improved them. I keep my rents lower than market rents as I believe in fair housing costs.

I am extremely concerned with the Health Department's decision to require landlords to pay the new fees and get the new insurance, all of which would cost thousands of dollars and make it prohibitive for me to continue being a small business. The amount I'd have to increase rents would make it unaffordable for tenants. Burlington is committed to having affordable housing and these new restrictive costs will only cause housing costs to go up. I am 73 years old, on a fixed income and yet I've always prioritized keeping these apartments in excellent condition and am committed to keeping my tenants safe and enjoying their homes in my building. With the proposed additional costs I don't think I'd be able to continue owning this property.

In addition, it is often difficult for me to find good painters and have often been on waiting lists, I understand that there is a tremendous shortage of contractors and painters who have the amount of insurance and the certifications needed to work for us.

While the Health Department may have had good intentions, I don't think they looked at small landlord situations in their passage of the new rules. I hope the Legislature can rectify this by passing H.184 in order to ensure that small landlords and owner-occupied properties be able to afford to manage the maintenance of our buildings.

I ask that you include this letter into the Committee's public record for consideration of H.184. Thank you for your consideration,

Linda Tierney
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