

March 20, 2023

House General & Housing Committee.

I am writing about H 184 scheduled for its first hearing on March 22nd, which I support.

This bill would reverse the Health Department's imposition of hundreds of dollars in fees and thousands of dollars in specialty contractor insurance requirements for landlords of pre-1978 rental units who paint and maintain their own units. The Health Department's new lead paint rules requiring additional fees and specialty contractor insurance expenses were adopted in October of last year.

I have a rental property, which was built pre-1978. I have taken both the (IRC) Inspection Repair and Cleaning and (RRPM) Renovation, Repair, Painting and Maintenance trainings, and I passed each training test successfully for certification. These trainings provide education as well as hands on training for anyone who repairs and maintains their own pre-1978 rental units.

If H184 is not passed, I and other landlords will be left with the burden imposed by the Vermont Department of Health rules requiring additional licenses and additional specialty contractor insurance likely totaling more than \$3,000 for each landlord who wishes to continue to repair, paint and maintain their own pre-1978 rental units. The Health Department's rules do not increase tenant safety, and landlords' ability to provide quality repairs. They only increase landlord expenses.

The other option to maintain pre-1978 rental properties would be to hire a contractor who meets the requirements of the rules. In my county there are only two contractors who possess the licenses and insurance necessary to perform the work on pre-1978 rental properties. Two contractors could not possibly serve the number of units in this county, nor may it be financially feasible, if one were available.

I believe the Vermont Department of Health rules were not well thought out and adapted without the realization that the financial burden imposed could decrease the number of rental units in an environment where we already have a deficit of rental units. If H184 is not passed, I fear the additional financial burden landlords will face may mean some of us will no longer find it feasible to rent out our properties.

Please support H184.

Sincerely,

Susan J. Powers
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