

Good morning. I am Steve Finner, a resident of Barre City and representing Rights and Democracy.

I want to start by thanking you all for your service, especially during this time of year.

However, five two hour meetings are only a start given the complexity of this subject in the face of Vermont having the second highest rate of homelessness in the nation and the scarcity of affordable housing.

Everyday we are hearing of someone dying because they are living outside without shelter.

Two things are very clear. There are I that are taking too long. The time is long past for making no cause eviction illegal. The legislative quid pro quo is obvious and I hope that it will be pursued come January.

I also bring to your attention again the concern raised in my comments at the November 4th meeting. Apartment applicants who admit to having been incarcerated for a felony are often denied the apartment for that reason. Simply put, they have paid their dues and hopefully been rehabilitated by the experience. Continuing to penalize them after their release only serves to raise the probability of recidivism which serves no one as well as creating another victim or more. Please consider legislation prohibiting such discrimination.

Thank you again for your service.