

Imagine that grocery stores all over Vermont were mandated to give away groceries to customers who cannot afford to pay? Imagine gas stations being required by law to let customers fill up their tanks for free when they don't have money to pay BUT they have no other way to get to work.

Now imagine property owners of residential rental property being told that they must allow a renter to live there for free IF that renter has no place else to go.

The State of Vermont has a welfare system which provides some assistance with the costs of living for those in need.

An unfortunate number of the people who need housing are not capable of holding down a job, paying rent, nor living in a way which is safe, clean, and respectful of the property and neighbors. The Hotel/Motel program was full of people suffering from addictions, alcoholism, mental health issues, and other disabilities which keep them in poverty.

But these social problems will not be solved by causing financial losses to the Landlords who are trying to make a living providing clean, safe residential rentals. The State of Vermont must encourage people to become landlords and support existing landlords to continue being landlords in the State of Vermont by protecting Landlords in a timely and meaningful way from financial losses and property damage caused by problem renters, many of whom are acting in bad faith.

The State of Vermont can help Landlords by making eviction history a matter of public record, freely available to everyone at no cost.

The State of Vermont can help Landlords by streamlining and expediting evictions of problem tenants, no longer requiring Landlords to go through a maze of expensive and difficult filings and court appearances, with judgment liens that can never be collected because problem tenants work under the table for cash or move from job to job, if they work at all.

Landlords need timely and meaningful support and protection from the financial losses Landlords suffer every year otherwise Landlords will not be able to afford to continue providing housing. We must protect housing providers from renters who are acting in bad faith, otherwise there will be an ever increasing shortage of rental housing.

Vermont can support existing landlords to stay in Vermont by:

1. Making eviction history easily accessed at no charge, and a matter of public record.
2. Understanding that landlords don't evict good tenants. Problem tenants create financial losses for landlords that result in higher rent costs for good tenants. Problem tenants are therefore making it harder for good tenants to afford rent. When the State of Vermont supports Landlords to evict problem tenants quickly, The State of Vermont is actually creating residential rentals for all the good prospective tenants who are looking

for a place to rent. Let's reward the people who are doing everything right, who are responsible and hard-working, honest and honorable.

3. Streamlining evictions so that they are fast, and no longer costly to Landlords, with State compensation to Landlords for lost rents and property damage so that residential rentals will be in good condition and available to rent to a good renter immediately.

We do not need laws which enable bad tenants. We need laws which encourage landlords to continue providing safe, clean, comfortable and affordable housing for people who will pay their rent on time and will treat the property with care and respect.

The State of Vermont may need to solve homelessness by providing State Owned and State Managed Housing for people who are struggling with addiction, chronic health issues, behavioral issues, mental health issues, physical disabilities, and/or lack of education which can be obstacles to keeping a job and are obstacles to being responsible renters. We all share the goal of moving people off the streets into a warm, safe living situation where they are not alone, where they have access to social services and would have their basic needs met. But Landlords are not the ones to provide and manage this kind of special-needs housing.

Landlords are taking a big risk trying to provide safe and comfortable affordable rental housing in Vermont, and I can tell you that we need your support and your help in order to make it work.

Thank you, 
Maya Drummond
Business owner for 26 years in Londonderry Vermont