

Dear Chair Mihaly,

As you consider H.772 this week, I urge you to prioritize housing stability and due process.

I support rent stabilization and core tenant protections in the bill, including limits on excessive rent increases, reasonable security deposit caps, habitability defenses, and keeping eviction records confidential until judgment.

Provisions that speed up evictions and shorten notice and court timelines, however, will push more Vermonters into homelessness and limit their ability to challenge illegal evictions. Rushing eviction cases, limiting defenses, and eliminating jury trials undermines fairness and does not solve our housing crisis. As a former attorney at Legal Services of Northern California, I have firsthand experience of how an expedited eviction process, like CA's, harms tenants and limits the ability of attorneys to ensure their due process rights. As a former attorney at San Mateo Legal Aid, I imagine you also have first hand experience of the problems that an expedited eviction process presents.

Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,
Eric Schultheis, Ph.D., Esq. (Plainfield resident)