

All,

It is my understanding that VT legislators are considering additions or other changes to VT law regarding landlord/tenant law, leases, rental properties, etc.

I manage a number of properties in Vermont. On the whole my experience has been good. We face some significant challenges though. One of the challenges is a lack of workers and contractors to maintain the properties. I will not be addressing those challenges in this email.

Some of the challenges you all need to consider when making new laws is how to avoid making the rental housing situation worse.

It is clear that we all want to improve the rental housing situation in Vermont. We'll proceed with this email assuming that premise is true.

Unfortunately there are differing opinions on how to address many of the issues that affect landlords, tenants and taxpayers.

As a landlord, I have a few goals:

- provide safe housing
- protect the interests of my tenants
- protect my assets/buildings
- obtain a return on my investment

Please bear in mind that when "bad" tenants are protected by laws that shield them from accountability, the landlords and "good" tenants suffer.

The government has no business regulating private contracts. If a property owner wishes to terminate a lease at the end of the agreed-upon time period the landlord should be able to do so.

Taking away property rights from landlords is not an appropriate way to solve housing issues, tenant behavior issues or other social ills. Government interference with housing policies and contracts has always resulted in negative unintentional consequences.

Please do not limit the landlord's ability to make decisions about their own property. Tenants' rights are more than adequately protected already. Denying landlords basic rights will have long-term negative consequences for landlords and tenants.

Over the past few years I have been in the unfortunate situation to have to evict tenants for non-payment of rent. In all cases the process was expensive for me and took on the order of 6 months to 12 months. The courts allow significant leeway for tenants and legal aid to make mistakes in their filings, with procedures, etc. however,

landlords are not given the same courtesy. Any simple filing error or process mistake sends the whole action right back to step one.

Thank you

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