



Testimony to Vermont House General and Housing Committee*

Proposed Landlord-Tenant Bills (H.772, H.399, H.440, H.688, H.756)
February 5, 2026

Jess Hyman, Associate Director, Housing Advocacy Programs
Karin Ames, Housing Education Coordinator, Vermont Tenants Program

***See additional document for full testimony**

CVOEO's Housing Advocacy Programs

STATEWIDE

1. Vermont Tenants

Tenant Helpline

Renter workshops

Individual consultations

2. Fair Housing Project

Consultations and assistance with filing complaints

Trainings for renters, landlords, and municipalities

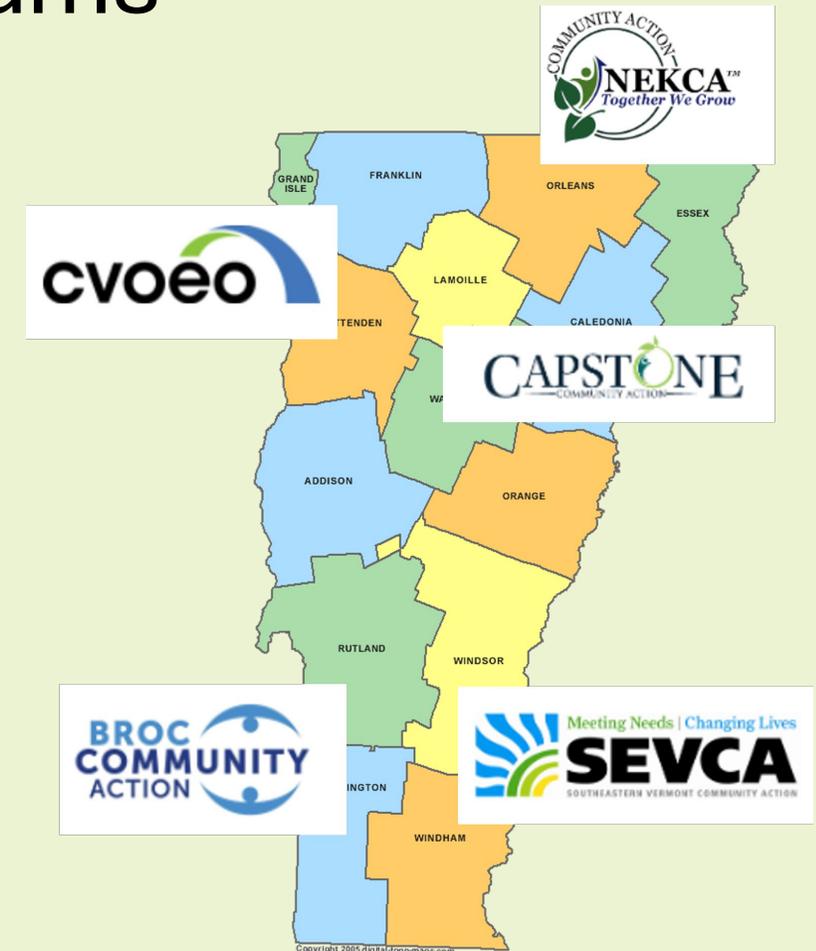
Advocacy – local, state, national

3. Mobile Home Program

Resident Helpline

Resident organizing, technical support, referrals, advocacy

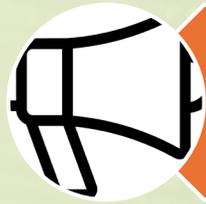
And: **Housing Stabilization & Retention Services, HOME Family Housing Vouchers, Statewide Asylum Seekers Assistance Program**



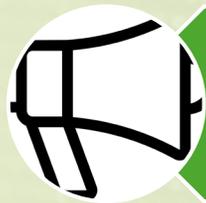
Key Topics: H.399, H.440, H.688, H.756, H.772

- **Eviction Notice Periods**
- **Rent Increase Limits**
- **“Just Cause” Eviction Protections**
- **Application Fees Prohibited – Clarification**
- **Rental Registry**
- **Tenant Right to Counsel During Eviction Proceedings**
- **Eviction Record Confidentiality**
- **Appropriations**

Shortened **eviction notice periods** will drastically increase the number of unhoused families in Vermont.



Example – “Alice”

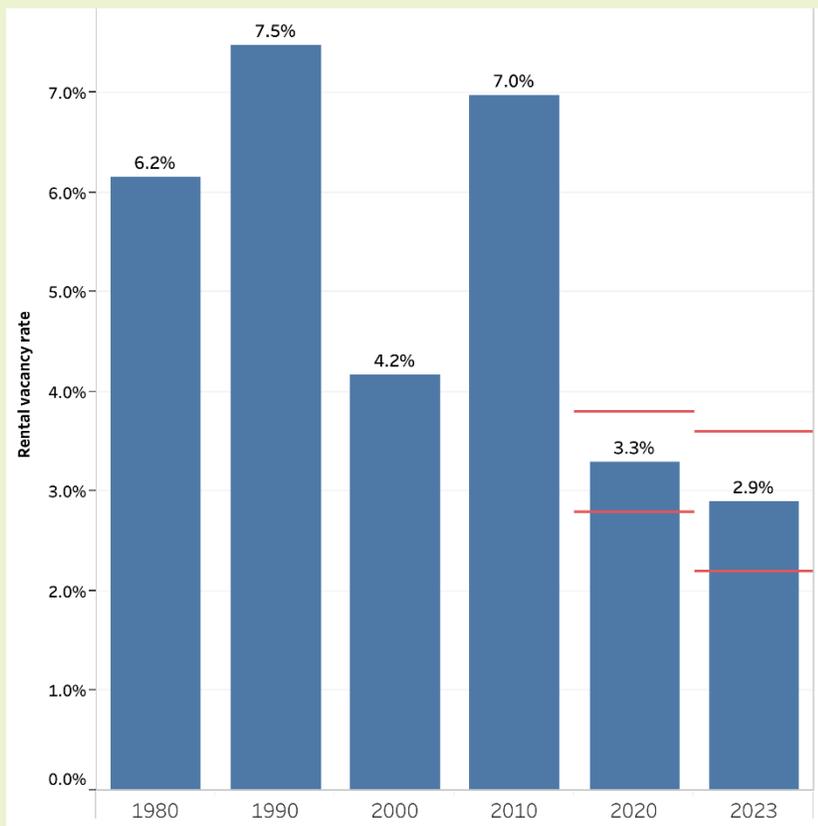


Example – “Jenna”

Rent Increase Limits:

Why is it so hard to rent in Vermont?

Low Availability



High Cost

Average Vermont Renter...

- Earns \$17.67/hour
- Can afford \$919 in rent
HUD FMR for 1brm is \$995-\$1476;
2brm is \$1099-\$1936
- Must work 1.7 full-time jobs to afford market rent

Data Sources: <https://nlihc.org/oor>; <https://housingdata.org/profile/rental-housing-costs/vacancy-rate>; <https://housingdata.org/profile/rental-housing-costs/hud-fair-market-rent> Last Updated August 2025

Just Cause eviction protections will ensure tenants who meet all their tenant obligations can continue to live in Vermont.

Several communities around the state have passed Just Cause eviction protections, including Burlington, Essex, Winooski, and Montpelier.

In 2021, the Burlington “Just Cause Eviction” measure passed with a 63% to 37% margin.

More key topics



Application fees prohibition clarifications will ensure that housing providers do not profit from the application process and that people can afford to apply for housing.



A **rental registry** would improve communications with housing providers and provide data that is critical to addressing the state's housing needs.



A **right to counsel** during eviction proceedings prevents eviction.



Eviction record confidentiality will ensure that a single point in time in a person's life won't prevent their access to housing for a lifetime.

Appropriations

1

Housing Advocacy Programs – \$200,000 to support statewide landlord and tenant education

2

Financial Coaches - \$500,000 to Community Action Agencies to support financial coaches (\$100,000 each CAP)

3

Landlord Liaisons – \$600,000 to CAP agencies for key bridge-building positions (\$200,000 for Capstone and \$100,000 for each other CAP)

Please contact us for further information:

- **Jess Hyman**
Fair Housing Project
Associate Director Housing Advocacy Programs
jhyman@cvoeo.org, 802-660-3456 ext 106
- **Karin Ames**
Housing Education Coordinator, Vermont Tenants Program
kames@cvoeo.org, 802-660-3455 ext 109
- **Vermont Tenants Resources:** <https://www.cvoeo.org/get-help/vermont-tenants-rights-and-resources>
- **Fair Housing Training for Landlords:** <https://www.cvoeo.org/fair-housing-training-for-landlords>