

Joan Shannon
Burlington South District City Councilor
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Begin forwarded message:

From: John Thompson-Figueroa <jtf@burlingtontelecom.net>
Subject: Charter Change
Date: September 23, 2020 at 7:46:34 PM EDT
To: jshannon@burlingtonvt.gov

[WARNING]: External Message

Dear Ms Shannon,

I'm writing to register my opposition to the following Charter Change question:

“Shall the Charter of the City of Burlington, Acts of 1949, No.298 as amended, be further amended by adopting and adding a new section 48(66) to read as follows: 'To provide by ordinance protecting for residential tenants from eviction without “just cause,” where just cause may include but is not limited to (a) a material breach of a written rental agreement, (b) violation of state statutes regulating tenant obligations in residential rental agreements, (c) non-payment of rent while just cause may exclude (a) expiration of rental agreements (b) personal disagreements. The ordinance may also set a maximum rent increase with the purpose of preventing de facto evictions. The ordinance may require that landlords provide notice of just cause and other legal requirements as part of the rental agreement;’?”

As the owner of a small rented condominium, hoping to someday purchase an owner-occupied duplex or triplex in Burlington, it troubles me that I might be subject to infinite leases, which would have the consequence of rendering me unable to perform major renovation projects that would require the residence to be vacant, thus allowing the property to fall into disrepair and perhaps lose its value, resulting in reduced tax revenue for the city! Multiply this by the hundreds of single units and small owner-occupied duplex/triplex properties in the city and you'll have a noticeable problem in a few years. The proposed charter change is overreach which tries to solve a real problem by creating a new one. Perhaps a more nuanced approach is in order, one

that exempts owner-occupied small (<5 units) properties, and focuses on out-of-town landlords who own multiple blocks' worth of apartment buildings.

Thanks for your consideration.

John Thompson-Figueroa
Resident of the Old North End since 2002.

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