

Begin forwarded message:

From: patrick johnson <superdogirie@gmail.com>
Subject: No Cause Evictions Charter change
Date: September 22, 2020 at 8:31:17 PM EDT
To: jstromberg@burlingtonvt.gov, pfreeman@burlingtonvt.gov,
jshannon@burlingtonvt.gov

[WARNING]: External Message

Hi counselors

After reading the charter change committees proposed wording on "no cause evictions" charter change I have many misgivings. I have advocated for affordable rent and protection for tenants publicly for years and I find this charter change to be loaded with unintended consequences. I am worried that this may have just the opposite effect of its intent.

It has been my experience as a white male landlord and a good neighbor that getting somebody removed for abusive behavior is awful difficult as it is.

As a landlord a look at myself as a small business whose margins are thin . If there is one bad tenant who perpetually scares away other tenants in the building and promotes a toxic environment and I cannot remove the bad tenant it may cost me by virtue of having apartments open. Leaving apartments open means that I will have to increase future rents on the vacant apartments to offset for the loss.

I have an apartment in my house and it is extremely important to have the opportunity, that I've never used, to remove somebody who may be walking right up to the line regarding the spirit of the lease but not stepping over the line and creating a toxic environment. If I am unable to remove that person from my house I would have to leave my own home there by forcing me to be "evicted" . I also have a single family home that has four rooms in it and individual leases for each of the rooms (per the tenets request) and if one of the tenants is creating a toxic environment, perhaps due to an initially concealed mental illness, it may push out the good tenants and prevent the rest of the rooms from being rented . As I keep the rent affordable as possible I have very little cushion to absorb months of lost rent and this may force the house to be sold or worse into foreclosure.

I sincerely do not want to have to raise the rent to have a larger buffer in case there is this very unlikely situation but with this charter change I will have to give this serious consideration.

I could go on and give you a few good examples of "no cause evictions" being beneficial for neighborhoods as well but this email is already too long..

I cannot stress enough how disheartening the wording is to me. As an individual who decided to invest not in the stock market but in my community I would hope that there would be provisions in this charter change to protect landlords that may need to use no cause evictions as "a last resort".The wording definitely makes me feel like I am being lumped in with some of the major players in this town.

In reading the minutes of the last meeting it occurs that there are only 80 (20% of roughly 400 total evictions) no cause evictions in all of Chittenden County with no exact number given for Burlington. This seems like an unnecessary change to Burlington's charter for a tiny percentage of its population. Please consider a much more comprehensive “incentive” approach to affordable housing and no cause evictions rather than this charter change.

I am still very excited that our city counselors are trying to make some much needed headway towards affordable housing and protection for tenants and am excited to see additional proposals that I can wholeheartedly support in the very near future.

Thanks for taking time to read yet another email...

Patrick Johnson, 67 Greene St , right down the street from Max.

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