

Begin forwarded message:

From: "ricky@fpmvt" <ricky@fpmvt.com>
Subject: Proposed Language Change
Date: September 23, 2020 at 4:12:43 PM EDT
To: jshannon@burlingtonvt.gov

[WARNING]: External Message

Joan,

I wanted to email you to express my deep concern about the proposed change in the language regarding No Cause Evictions. I am sure you are inundated by a lot of emails so forgive me for being brief and getting straight to the point. This change would directly effect my ability to maintain peaceful residences for both my tenants and the community at large. There are many circumstances that might call for a tenants removal that wouldn't specifically be listed on the lease. This could be respectful behavior cooperating with HOA or neighborhood rules complying with leash laws. The list is pretty expansive.

Don't get me wrong I believe in tenants rights. I've been a property manager in this area for 7 years. I worked at some of the biggest companies in our towns, the little mom and pops, and even UVM campus. I'm a renter still myself like many people in my age group. I wish I could afford to buy a multifamily. It's all I have ever worked for since I became a professional. I am so close to achieving that dream in this town a place I love. However, if this law is passed I will be unable to purchase that property.

Lenders offer two options to those purchasing a multi family. Either you can owner occupy them with a 3.5% down payment or you have to pay 21% if you cannot live in the unit. All lenders carry windows the owner has to occupy the space with the time allotment being usually less than 90 days. This will mean landlord-ship will be only affordable to extremely wealthy or corporations. It will make ownership simply out of reach for middle class workers like myself. People who would be ethical landlords that both live and invest in their communities.

I propose instead of changing this language that we extend the deadline owners have to non renew tenants. Right now to follow this process as written I need to provide 60 days notice to non renew or no cause evict my tenants at the conclusion of their lease. As a resident I am sure you are aware that timeline is very difficult for renters to accommodate as housing is typically listed 120 days in advance. My proposal would be for landlords to notify tenants in writing 120 days before the end of their lease of their intentions not to renew. They must disclose the reason and provide the tenant contact information for Burlington Tenants Court system. They meet monthly and can deliberate each case on a case by case basis.

This would allow tenants to be heard is free and gives landlords a fair chance to remove tenants if truly needed.

I am increasingly concerned that once this is past the Burlington Tenants Union will seek to "Ban the Box". This phrase was originally to protect recently incarcerated individuals from disclosing their criminal history till the last part of their application process. It's to help provide them with a fair shot at being selected as a tenant. Portland, Oregon recently instituted this and I believe in this cause. But our tenants union wants to remove that as well as credit score, landlord history and employment info? So now I cannot even protect my investment before entering in to this permanent agreement with a tenant?

That sounds insane! I am not sure if you have been keeping up with Portland Oregon recently but these policies have lead to city wide catastrophe. With tenants, landlords, and business suffering because laws were enacted without consultation from both sides of the fence. To be honest I am shocked we have to listen to rental studies done in Boston in comparison to Burlington. I would find Portland to be a much more applicable market and area. My guess is those numbers didn't paint the correct picture Erika was painting in her presentation. I also think we should consulting Code Enforcement I can't believe they don't have applicable data on file and could provide a more relevant perspective.

Thank you much for taking the time to read this and for all the work you do. I appreciated your candor and leadership in last weeks meeting. I wish you and the other council members the best.

~Ricky

Richard Martin
Director of Operations

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