

Dear Members of the House,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Rhode Island House Bill H7891. As a resident of Rhode Island, I believe that this bill, if passed, would have detrimental effects on both landlords and tenants alike, ultimately leading to negative consequences for our community as a whole.

While I understand the intent behind the proposed measures, particularly in addressing issues of affordable housing and tenant rights, the provisions outlined in H7891 are overly restrictive and fail to consider the broader implications on the housing market and property owners' rights.

Firstly, the implementation of rent control, with limits set by the city on an annual basis, is a shortsighted approach that can have unintended consequences, such as disincentivizing property owners from maintaining or improving their rental units. Rent control measures have been shown to stifle investment in housing and lead to shortages in the long run, exacerbating the very problem they aim to solve.

Additionally, the imposition of a citywide rental registry and the requirement for just cause eviction remove essential flexibility for property owners in managing their properties. By stripping property owners of the right to not renew a lease at the end of a term, this bill undermines their autonomy and may discourage investment in rental properties.

Furthermore, the provision allowing tenants to escrow rental payments rather than pay landlords due to violations poses significant financial risks for property owners and could lead to disputes and delays in resolving maintenance issues. Similarly, the requirement for landlords to pay relocation fees to tenants for legitimate reasons such as renovation or family occupancy adds an undue financial burden on property owners.

Overall, the proposed measures in H7891 are not conducive to fostering a healthy and sustainable rental market in Rhode Island. Instead of implementing overly restrictive regulations, I believe that policymakers should focus on solutions that promote collaboration between landlords and tenants, incentivize investment in affordable housing, and address systemic issues such as housing discrimination and income inequality.

In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider your support for Rhode Island House Bill H7891 and to explore alternative approaches that prioritize the interests of both landlords and tenants while addressing the underlying challenges in our housing market.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,
Sylvia Stipic