

Dear Committee clerk Huntley,

I am reaching out to express my firm opposition to H 7989. This bill proposes measures like rent control and just cause eviction clauses, but also introduces overly stringent and punitive regulations that, in reality, exacerbate the issue of housing scarcity rather than mitigating it. Such measures impose additional, unnecessary costs on both property owners and renters, aggravating the financial strain everyone is experiencing due to the escalating cost of living. A striking illustration of this is the dramatic surge in property taxes in Providence, where the average tax on properties with more than six units rocketed from \$26,000 in 2015 to an astounding \$51,000 in 2023, effectively doubling in under a decade. This spike in taxes is emblematic of broader increases in expenses associated with property management and upkeep.

It is undeniable that renters are shouldering a heavy financial burden, yet it is equally critical to acknowledge that this burden does not solely fall on tenants. Landlords, too, are feeling the pressure from the rising costs of insurance, taxes, utilities, maintenance, and repairs. In the wake of COVID-19, the price hike has become a universal challenge, touching every aspect of our daily lives. Instead of imposing more regulations on already overwhelmed parties, we should aim for laws that genuinely address these issues, facilitating collaboration and support between landlords and tenants. The aim should be to enact inclusive policies that empower both groups to work together towards sustainable solutions that protect those most at risk in our communities.

I advocate for a thoughtful consideration of evidence-based research and insights, such as those offered by the National Apartments Association, to inform balanced and effective housing policies. Their analysis highlights the unintended negative impacts of measures like rent control, underscoring the importance of well-considered legislation that addresses the root causes of housing affordability and availability crises without penalizing stakeholders.

It is essential to address the economic realities facing prospective buyers of multifamily homes. If these properties cease to be profitable due to overregulation and excessive costs, interest in purchasing them will understandably wane. This scenario is akin to the absurdity of accepting employment with a company that fails to provide compensation; it's a proposition no reasonable person would entertain. The profitability of rental properties is a critical component of a healthy real estate market. Ensuring these investments remain viable is essential not only for the investors themselves but also for maintaining the availability and quality of housing for tenants. Without a balanced approach that considers the financial health of property investment, we risk deterring investment in the housing market, further compounding our existing challenges.

Sincerely,

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