

Dear Committee clerk Huntley,

Rent control, while aimed at providing affordable housing, can have several negative side effects:

Housing Shortages: Rent control can reduce the incentive for landlords to maintain or upgrade properties, leading to a decrease in available housing stock over time. Landlords may also convert rental units into other types of properties like commercial, office space, or AirBNB to avoid rent control regulations.

Quality Decline: With rent control limiting potential revenue from rental properties, landlords may reduce maintenance and repairs, resulting in deteriorating housing quality over time.

Reduced Investment: Rent control can discourage investment in rental properties, as landlords may perceive lower potential returns due to capped rental income. This reduced investment can impact the overall housing market and limit new construction of rental units. RI currently needs a minimum of 3,000 new units per year to even come close to meeting demand.

Distorted Market: Rent control can create distortions in the housing market, affecting rental prices and supply dynamics. Some tenants may benefit from lower rents, but others may face challenges finding suitable housing due to reduced availability.

Unintended Consequences: Rent control policies can lead to unintended consequences, such as increased bureaucracy to enforce regulations, reduced tax revenue from rental properties, and potential displacement of tenants due to housing shortages.

Inequality among Tenants: Rent control policies may benefit long-term tenants who are protected by lower rents, while new tenants entering the market face higher rental prices due to limited availability of affordable housing.

Economic Impact: Rent control can impact the overall economic health of a city or region by affecting property values, real estate investment, and related industries such as construction and property management.

Overall, while rent control aims to address housing affordability, policymakers must carefully consider these potential negative effects and explore alternative solutions to achieve a balance between tenant protections and market stability.

"Just cause eviction" laws, while designed to protect tenants from unfair or arbitrary eviction, can have several negative consequences:

Reduced Landlord Flexibility: These laws limit a landlord's ability to terminate a lease or evict a tenant, even in cases where legitimate reasons for eviction exist. This reduction in flexibility can make it challenging for landlords to manage their properties effectively.

Increased Bureaucracy: Implementing just cause eviction laws may introduce administrative burdens and legal complexities for landlords, requiring them to navigate specific procedures and documentation to evict tenants for valid reasons.

Potential for Property Damage or Nuisance: Landlords may face difficulties in addressing disruptive or damaging behavior by tenants, such as property damage, nuisance activities, or disturbances to other tenants, if these behaviors do not fall under the specified just cause eviction criteria.

Higher Legal Costs: Landlords may incur higher legal costs associated with proving just cause for eviction in court, especially if disputes arise over the interpretation of just cause criteria.

Impact on Property Values: Investors and property owners may perceive increased risk associated with owning rental properties in areas with strict just cause eviction laws, potentially leading to reduced property values and diminished investment in housing.

Market Distortion: Just cause eviction laws can distort the rental market by limiting turnover of rental units and reducing the availability of housing options for new tenants, particularly in areas with high demand for rental properties.

Tenant Behavior: Some tenants may exploit just cause eviction protections by engaging in disruptive or damaging behavior without facing immediate consequences, leading to challenges in maintaining a harmonious living environment for all tenants. Good tenants would suffer most in this case.

Sincerely,

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