

June 23, 2020

Dear Legislators

This letter is to express my opposition to current proposed legislation to change the rental agreements that we have with tenants that will effectively confiscate our rental property for a at least a year. The proposed legislation allows tenants to avoid paying rent for up to a year with no downside for tenants even when they are employed full time and have the funds to pay their contractual obligations. The proposed legislation requires the owner of the property to pay all operating costs such as utilities, property taxes, and payroll costs to maintain the property even though the legislation cuts off the source of funding to pay such costs. This will force many property owners to use their retirement savings to fund operations.

We agree that there are individuals who are unable to afford their housing if they have become unemployed through no fault of their own. However this is problem of society in general and society in general should lend a helping hand. We do not agree that the legislature should select a minority of individuals to shoulder the full burden. It would seem that a much better solution would be to raise income taxes on everyone so that everyone could share in a small burden rather than a small minority of individuals bearing a huge burden and in many cases using funds saved for retirement to sustain operations.

I did not see anything in the proposed legislation that require utility companies to continue providing services if property owners do not have the funds to pay such costs. In fairness, utility companies should be required to provide services for up to a year even if they are not receiving payments. Like rents, there should be no late charges, no interest and then payments only have to be paid when the owner has collected the past due rent from the tenants. The same goes for property taxes.

As a legislator, I am sure you are aware that any tenant who has not paid rent for a year will never pay the rent. We already have tenants who have the ability to pay their rent but are not paying because there is no downside for them. This proposed legislation will compound this problem as more and more tenants will abuse the system for a year and then skip leaving the property owner with no recourse.

Please do not steal our property and hard earned retirement savings just because you can.

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