

Michael Morey
Oakland
LD 1904

May 14, 2023

Dear Judiciary Committee members:

My name is Michael Morey and I operate two rental buildings in the Waterville area. I am writing today to stress my opposition to LD 1904, An Act To Enact The Maine Fair Chance Housing Act. Although I firmly believe in giving people second chances who are truly trying to turn their lives around, I also firmly believe that I have an obligation to current law-abiding tenants to provide them with safe housing for them and their families.

A prospective tenants criminal record is only one factor in the decision-making process of tenant screening and never singularly the only factor. Like credit scores and other financial information, as a property owner screening for the best tenants to occupy my housing, criminal records are taken into consideration as to the nature, time frame, frequency and severity of any convictions to determine the prospective tenant's viability.

Without the use of criminal records at the very start of the prospective tenant screening process, I believe I would be ethically and morally negligent in my responsibility to all my existing tenants and their families. Not having the ability to take into consideration criminal convictions for a prospective tenant opens up my law-abiding tenants to potential harm from sexual predators, violent criminals, theft, domestic abusers, etc. Good tenants will vacate rental units when they no longer feel safe in their homes.

Passing this legislation will only make it tougher for people to find good housing as all other screening standards will have to be enhanced and strictly adhered to, harming people with no so good credit, income or rental histories that I might have been willing to give a fair chance if I were able to consider criminal convictions up front.

Since when did criminals obtain more rights than responsible law-abiding citizens. This legislation will all but insure to create a new protected class of people: individuals involved in the criminal justice system and their families.

I strongly urge you and the entire Committee to oppose this piece of bad legislation. Thank you very much for your time.

Michael Morey
Oakland, Maine