

## Landlord Testimonials

In June of 1995, while living in Vermont, our young family, including our 5-year-old daughter and 11-year-old son, found ourselves without a place to live. My wife and I were both working professionals. The owners of the home we were renting informed us that the bank was foreclosing on the house, and we had two weeks to leave. There was a housing shortage in the community where we lived. We bought a tent and paid for a Grand Isle State Park camping lot. The park had a maximum continuous day rule. Luckily, we were full participating members of our community and the park allowed us to move our site every 14 days. It gave us a form of stability. It was a traumatic time for our family. We worked, had health insurance, and each had a car. We had a thriving family, but we didn't have a home. In August of 1995, we were approached by a member of the community. He made us an offer. He had a fifth wheel that he offered us to stay in while he prepared a piece of land to put a three-bedroom single wide on. He surveyed the land, dug a well, bought the single wide, and in December of 1995, we moved in. Rent was \$725. His kindness allowed us the opportunity to move forward. My wife and I agreed that if we found ourselves able to offer help and hope in that way, we would.

I believe the foundation of a community and family is housing. A place to call home. A place where a person can love, laugh, learn, and grow while feeling safe. On several occasions over the years, we have been able to return the kindness shown to us. We have owned several rental properties over the past 20 years. We now have just two. We can't absorb the weight of others' misfortune as we once could, but we do what we can, when we can. Recently, one of our tenants, with two children, experienced some real-life issues that made paying the rent difficult, if not impossible, most months. We had two choices, eviction or patience. Even though we rely on the rent to help cover our mortgage, we chose patience. When we learned about the eviction prevention program, we saw an opportunity to assist our tenant. If anyone thinks using the term "assist our tenant" is self-serving, let me assure you, it is not. We could have evicted the tenant, doubled the monthly rent, and rented our property to a new tenant. We carried our tenant's weight and searched for a program that would benefit the tenant. We learned about the eviction prevention program from a newscast. We see the eviction prevention program as a way to help families and individuals find a way to maintain family continuity and hope while maintaining their dignity and respect. Housing continuity is essential to family stability. The eviction prevention program gave our tenant that opportunity. It also gave our tenant a feeling of security and hope. With hope, the tenant found ambition. The program allowed us to keep the rent unchanged and affordable for the family. It gave us a way to repay ourselves for the resources we used to maintain the rental property. The eviction prevention program gives a window of guaranteed rent, allowing the tenant to find a solid footing and a window of opportunity for finding a permanent job without the stress of doing odd jobs and day labor.

The eviction prevention program is a good program that offers far more to communities than rent. It helps strengthen them through individual opportunity, small business support, community growth, family security, and continuity. It provides families in need the ability to move forward with dignity and respect. I hope that the program continues to be able to offer families in need of housing, whether they are newly in need or still in need of the assistance required to allow them to find a path to Independence.

Sincerely,

Wally McCarthy, Androscoggin County.

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I wanted to take a moment to send my sincerest thank you's! A tenant of mine, Maxx, had been going through what seemed like a string of bad luck. Because of this program he is on his way to getting back on his feet and has avoided eviction. He has expressed his gratitude for the EPP fund and the work you all are doing on behalf of cases like his to allocate those funds.

From a landlord perspective, I thought the portal was easy enough to use and provided plenty of information to do most of the application process on one's own. More importantly, throughout this process you all have been extremely responsive and professional even through the Thanksgiving holiday. Thank you. If you all need feedback or testimony's to advocate on your behalf or on behalf of the EPP program I would be happy to discuss my experience.

Thank you all,

Grant Sorensen, Cumberland County

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To whom it may concern,

Cram Properties owns 4 mobile home parks in Penobscot and Hancock counties. We have upwards of 150 tenants. We believe that the Eviction Prevention Program is a beneficial initiative for both tenants and landlords alike. It has proven to be an invaluable lifeline for tenants facing financial difficulties. This initiative has not only helped families avoid the devastating possibility of eviction and allowed them to remain in their homes, but also helped them maintain stability, and rebuild their financial footing. For us, as a company, it has offered significant benefits as well, preventing the financial burdens associated with evictions and the loss of well-vetted tenants who are a good fit for our communities.

By working closely with our tenants, we've created strong relationships based on mutual understanding and trust. We always strive to make payment arrangements and support tenants through tough times, recognizing that evictions are often a last resort due to our own financial obligations. The costs and repercussions of evictions extend beyond monetary losses for our company, leaving families in worse situations with blemished rental histories and sometimes no chance of getting accepted into another rental unit.

This program has been a beacon of hope for many of our tenants, allowing them to catch up on overdue rent and look forward with optimism. The assistance with future rent payments has also helped them to manage their other bills more effectively, paving the way for them to eventually take full responsibility for their rent and remain in their homes. We as landlords, in turn, benefit from retaining tenants, strengthening our relationships with them and maintaining continuity in our rental income.

Providing tenants with a solution to an overwhelming challenge brings great relief and satisfaction to us. It ensures our company can meet its financial commitments, remain operational, and continue providing homes to deserving families.

Looking ahead, we hope this program continues to support those in need. Additionally, it might be beneficial to offer tenants assistance with budgeting and financial planning to further reduce eviction rates. Providing non-monetary support as well, like tips on prioritizing bills, could empower tenants to manage their finances better and maintain their homes. It is very important that the tenants are prepared to stand on their own when the assistance is no longer available.

The Eviction Prevention Program has greatly benefited all participants by addressing inequalities, boosting stability, and ensuring the well-being of our communities.

Thank you for your time,  
Porsché Harnois  
Cram Properties LLC