

Blum, Alyster

From: Denis Lachman <denis@lachmanarchitects.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2025 7:47 PM
To: Cmte HED
Cc: 'Denis Lachman'; 'Kiya Smith'
Subject: Please oppose LD 1534: An Act Enabling Municipalities to Protect Tenants and Stabilize Rents

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This message originates from outside the Maine Legislature.

To Members of the Housing Committee.

We are writing to urge you to oppose LD 1534: An Act Enabling Municipalities to Protect Tenants and Stabilize Rents. Here is why:

We are Denis Lachman and Kiya Smith, a husband and wife small landlord/family business. We have 6 rental apartments units in one small building located in a Portland off-peninsula neighborhood. We have lived in and raised our family in the same neighborhood for 25 years. Our son-in-law is the property manager. Our small landlord/family business is neighborhood based and very personal. We know all our tenants well, and treat them as guests, and they stay for many years. Our goal is for their apartment to feel like home.

There are multiple reasons why LD 1534 is bad for both tenants and landlords. This email addresses only the most troubling to us: Sec 4460-A. Eviction based on just cause. This Section requires that an eviction or refusal by the landlord to renew a lease be based on just cause, which is limited to (1) Nonpayment, (2) Substantial violation or (3) Criminal activity.

In order for our tenants to feel at home, all other tenants in the same small building must be respectful and considerate so everyone feels safe. However, just one tenant who is rude, hostile, or inconsiderate can poison it for others. There are many ways a tenant can be problematic, without this limited definition of "just cause". Sec 4460-A will prevent us from choosing to not renew the lease of a problematic tenant. This puts all our other respectful tenants at risk, and undermines the feeling of home we have worked hard to create.

Under existing state law, tenants are incentivized to be respectful and considerate because if not, their lease may not be renewed. Sec 4460-A overturns this and removes tenants' incentive to cooperate. This is deeply unfair to all other respectful tenants and to landlords and a recipe for problems and confrontations. Imagine you had a rude guest in your home, and couldn't ask them to leave!

There are multiple reasons why LD 1534 is bad for both tenants and landlords, and Sec 4460-A "just cause" is the most troubling to us. Please oppose LD 1534.

Thanks for your consideration. Denis Lachman and Kiya Smith