

**House Transportation, Housing & Local Government**

**02/26/2025 01:30 PM**

**HB25-1168 Housing Protections for Victim-Survivors**

**Typed Text of Testimony Submitted**

<b>Name, Position, Representing</b>	<b>Typed Text of Testimony</b>
Paula Gruentzel For themselves	<p>I SUPPORT this bill. Landlords must NOT be allowed to RE-TRAUMATIZE Victim-Survivors by charging them for damage caused by their perpetrator. Allowing landlords to do that only enables and empowers perpetrators to continue to exact torment on their victims and makes landlords complicit in further abuse.</p> <p>Victim-survivors are NOT the bad guys. It's time for landlords and law enforcement to start holding PERPETRATORS accountable for their crimes and keep the victim-survivors safe.</p>



February 26, 2025

**RE: HB25-1168 Housing Protections for Victim-Survivors—SUPPORT**

Dear Members of the Transportation, Housing & Local Government Committee:

My name is Kathy Smith, and I am a Volunteer Lobbyist with the League of Women Voters of Colorado's Legislative Action Committee. **I am writing in support of HB25-1168 on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Colorado.**

The League of Women Voters of Colorado (LWVCO) has been a nonpartisan organization for 105 years, encourages informed and active participation in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Our membership spans the state of Colorado with 18 local leagues operating in several regions around our state. The LWVCO supports policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for everyone and continued evaluation to provide a basis for revision and strengthening of all procedures so that equality of opportunity for access to housing can be accomplished.

This bill expands housing protections for victims of domestic violence, domestic abuse, unlawful sexual behavior, and stalking (termed "victim-survivors"). It builds on existing legal framework to safeguard victim-survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) from housing instability, eviction, and homelessness. This bill addresses rights and remedies for victim-survivors and does not change any standards of burden of proof for the other party. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), domestic and GBV is a leading cause of housing instability, especially for women. In the Denver Metro Area, approximately 11% of individuals experiencing homelessness report fleeing domestic violence. GBV often coincides with financial abuse or economic coercion, and victim-survivors often face additional barriers to housing, such as limited financial resources and discrimination by housing providers. This compounds the challenges of escaping abuse and maintaining safe housing.

**We urge the committee members to vote YES on HB25-1168** to help expand housing protections for victim survivors of gender-based violence. Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

Respectfully,  
Kathy Smith, Volunteer Lobbyist, Housing  
League of Women Voters of Colorado  
110 16<sup>th</sup> Street Mall, Suite 1326  
Denver, CO 80202  
303-863-0437

Honored Committee Members:

We are the Housing Justice Committee of Together Colorado, a multifaith, nonpartisan community organization of 220 congregations, mobile home parks, and faith leaders throughout the State of Colorado, working together to put human dignity at the center of public life.

We are writing to urge a yes vote on HB25-1168, Housing Protections for Victim-Survivors. Gender-based violence (GBV) is a leading cause of housing instability across Colorado. While Colorado law provides some protections, they are insufficient to prevent people from facing eviction and entering the cycle of homelessness. HB-1168 aims to strengthen housing security by clarifying and enforcing lease-break protections, safeguarding security deposits from damages caused by abusers, extending the period to move out after an eviction, and increasing options to repay rent. To ensure due process, the bill expands eviction defenses to include more forms of GBV and improves court access for victim-survivors. It enhances safety by allowing the ability to change locks and adds provisions regarding eviction records suppression to protect privacy.

Domestic violence is a primary driver of homelessness and is one of the leading causes of homelessness for women and their children. Approximately 11% of people experiencing homelessness in Colorado reported fleeing domestic violence. Additionally, the number of evictions in Denver has reached an all-time high, with 15,960 filed in 2024, up from 12,910 Denver evictions filed in 2023.

A number of us are survivors of GBV and can tell you that fear of eviction and becoming unhoused makes it much harder to leave abusers who threaten us and our children.

**All** our faith traditions urge us to care for each other, no matter the color of our skin, the zip code where we live or how much is in our wallet. When people of faith and good conscience unite, we can make the way for all Coloradans, including the most vulnerable among us, to share in the blessings of a safe and stable home.

We, lay leaders from churches, synagogues and masjids in your communities, urge you to prioritize housing security during this legislative session. Through your work, we can ensure that all Coloradans have a place to call home.

Thank you for your public service and leadership. May God bless you and guide you in your important work for our beautiful state.

Respectfully,

Evelyn Hutt, MD  
Housing Justice Committee  
Together Colorado  
720-323-7491

