

Senate Local Government & Housing

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SB24-094 Safe Housing for Residential Tenants

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Cory Gaines Against themselves	<p>An open email to the sponsors of SB24-094, Safe Housing for Residential Tenants, and the Senate Local Government and Housing Committee</p> <p>Hello to all,</p> <p>My name is Cory Gaines. I am a lifelong resident of Colorado.</p> <p>I and my wife are also landlords. We have been now for about 6 years since my wife got married. Renting her condo, in fact, allowed us to be free of needing her income so she could be home with our child.</p> <p>We are both decent people. We both work hard and neither of us are rich. We keep her condo in excellent condition (as evidenced by the fact that over the course of 6 years renting it we've had two tenants) and let it at a reasonable price.</p> <p>I am now getting to the point of wondering whether or not this is something we want to continue. Every year, every single year, there are more and more (and yet more) regulations that we need to comply with or be worried about.</p> <p>Every single year new policy, divisive new policy that puts all landlords into the same group and all tenants into the same group comes out of this Assembly. I would like to remind you also that your efforts are on top of the efforts of the city and county of Denver.</p> <p>When there are more regulations, it is smaller landlords such as my wife and I, that are affected in ways that the larger landlords are not.</p>

	<p>In the face of yet more rules and inspections and things to be concerned about, I have a choice. I can take some of the precious little free time I have outside of work and family to try and deal with it, or I can take what precious little free money I have to pay retail to have someone else manage it for me.</p> <p>All the while no one is watching from overhead to note that the list of things I have to manage or pay to manage just grows every year.</p> <p>I'm sure there are bad landlords just as there are bad tenants. Perhaps you could be a little more thoughtful in your policy approach to do less harm to the decent hardworking landlords such as my wife and I in pursuit of helping those that have problems.</p> <p>As it is now, you're just adding more burdens. Eventually, you will add enough that I and others will start to figure that it's easier to sell the condo and pocket the cash without the headache.</p> <p>If the majority Democrats were indeed interested in maintaining more housing to help keep prices low, I would think you might pump the brakes a little on regulating it so much.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Cory</p>
<p>Beatriz Soto For Protegete at Conservation Colorado</p>	<p>As Coloradans, we all deserve the fundamental right to have healthy and stable homes. To ensure that families can maintain a secure and safe living environment, it is essential to enact policies that protect tenants' rights to safe housing. SB24-094 seeks to fix our existing law to ensure tenants can live in safe housing without unduly burdening landlords.</p> <p>According to the CO Latino Climate Justice Policy Handbook: 47% of renters in CO are Latinos, despite Latinos only representing 20% of the overall population. Many Latinos are lacking access to resilient and/or safe housing, as we often live in areas that are vulnerable to floods, wildfires, and exposure to the cumulative impacts of pollution in the exterior environment that also has an impact on existing housing, simply in some instances community gets no rest from</p>

	<p>unhealthy environments both outside their homes and inside their homes.</p> <p>In our research we also found that Latinos overwhelmingly are living in housing, apartments and other living structures that were built prior to 1980, renters, and low-income households have significantly less access to air conditioning and the benefits of newer and safer buildings built with newer building codes. We also found that renters are less able to adapt to climate change, reduce exposure to indoor air pollution, and recover from extreme weather events, this is why it's imperative to protect renters and ensure all Coloradans can adapt to a changing climate, by providing cooling as our weather gets warmer.</p> <p>According to our Colorado Climate Preparedness Roadmap just released at the end of 2023; Colorado is already experiencing the impacts of climate change and according to the roadmap we are facing Significant Climate Hazards and Risks. A warming climate is projected to increase these impacts through hazards such as extreme heat. Access to air conditioning is critical to reduce the negative health complications from extreme heat exposure as a result of climate change.</p> <p>For these reasons, we urge you to vote yes and support SB24-094.</p>
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Honorable Chair and members of the committee, thanks your thoughtful attention to my opposition to SB24-094. My name is John Carr and live in Senate District 15.

As a landlord it is I am naturally motivated to provide safe, well-maintained property. I get better tenants. I keep tenants longer. I can achieve better rents.

We have a standard in place that works really well and gives all parties sufficient latitude to handle most issues. SB24-094 is a one size fits all fix that creates perverse incentives for tenants and burdens housing providers with unnecessary regulation.

For example, your bill lowers the standard of notification required from tenants about repair needs. We must maintain the very reasonable requirement for written notification from tenants. Tenants and landlords must share equal accountability.

Currently the standard requires repairs done in a 'reasonable amount of time'. This standard respects the vagaries of the parts supply, contractor backlog, the relative severity of the problem and the American idea of erring on the side of liberty and letting citizens solve their own problems with minimal government intrusion.

Imposing inflexible repair deadlines creates perverse outcomes. It will make criminals out of good landlords who are constrained by chronically backlogged repair companies. It also incentivizes bad-actor tenants who are trying to cause trouble.

SB 24-094 presume all Landlords are bad and tenants are angels. This is what I have had to contend with:

I had a tenant whose irrational and threatening behavior frightened me enough to make inquiries with local police and sheriff's offices. He insisted on repeatedly violating the lease making unauthorized modifications. Once he altered a perfectly safe and functional electrical system. Instead of undoing the damage, he demanded I reimburse him for his expenses. Undaunted by the looming threat of legal consequences dared me to evict him. He quoted accurate for how long it would take and how much it would cost me. In the end I bought him out to make him go away and preserve my safety and my property from further abuse.

Just one more example. I had a pair of tenants, one of whom was a therapist for a local mental health center, by the way. They misrepresented the health of their pet, who was in the final stages of life and horribly soiled the home. They refused to clean up or manage the destructive pet. In addition, one of the roommates made bizarre and destructive and unauthorized home repairs. Once, he noticed a minor appearance of sugar ants in the kitchen (ant traps would have sufficed). He told me he first noticed the ants near the stove, so he took a caulking gun and sealed every crack and crevice of the stove. I had to throw it away and buy a new one. They were near to end of their lease term and I decided to wait it out and manage as best as I could. Upon exiting they urinated on all of the already destroyed the carpets. I have more examples.