

From the Desk of Karin Hall
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Resident of Senate District 16 and House District 38

Date: Tuesday, April 11, 2023

To: Senate Local Government & Housing Committee
Chair Sonya Jaquez, Vice Chair Tony Exum, Byron Pelton, Dylan Roberts,
Rod Pelton, Julie Gonzales, and Janice Rich

Subject: I oppose SB23-184 – Protections For Residential Tenants

I am writing this letter asking you to oppose SB23-184 – Protections For Residential Tenants.

Bad things happen to people all the time. Such as your car having a major breakdown, your catalytic converter being stolen, a member of the family becoming ill, and other miseries that life can throw at us. But when these things happen to low to moderate income individuals and families, the financial consequences can impact rental payments and mortgage payments, and lead to evictions.

SB23-184 has good intentions but hiding one's credit score undermines the significance of credit ratings and in the long run hurts the individual, a family, and society. Knowing one's credit rating and working to improve it needs to be taught in schools and reinforced through our journey through life.

Also, a move caused by an eviction is traumatic from paying for a move or finding friends to help and then the entire change of address process. I think that SB23-184 tries to normalize evictions and they should not be the norm.

SB23-184 will also impact the smaller older landlords who own a small apartment complex, a rental home, or a duplex with an onerous amount of paperwork. In short, SB23-184 grows government but at the expense of really providing direct help to low to moderate income individuals and families who are in financial trouble. *This bill is like putting a small band-aide on a cut that needs stitches.*

I think SB23-184 should be postponed indefinitely and a better solution to help people in arrears with their rent is for the state of Colorado to fund non-profit organizations that can provide quick emergency rental assistance when something bad happens to low to moderate income individuals and families. And bad things happen to all of us but when bad things happen to low to moderate people, the impact is much greater and often has terrible side effects.

The state can provide the funds to non-profits to help low to moderate income people directly with a rental or mortgage payment. I believe this approach will do more to help people stay in their homes, help them build their credit ratings, and hopefully move them forward in having a firm financial footprint in Colorado. This approach is much more beneficial to society, verses "normalizing evictions."

When I see bills like this, I often think of traffic stoplights. Traffic stoplights with their red, green, and yellow lights are a norm in society that we all obey. What would happen if as a society, drivers decided not to obey red and green lights? The roads would be a disaster. Take this analogy to paying one's bills, paying rent, paying your mortgage, and looking at and valuing your credit rating. What happens if we do not value taking care of our finances as a society? In my opinion society would start falling apart. So, let's not support behavior and bills that undermine society.

Instead, give individuals and families help when and where it is needed and give that help quickly – if someone is in trouble making their rent, then help them cure the problem so they do not have to move.

And here is one non-profit that provides emergency rental assistance state-wide – Community Economic Defense Fund (CEDP) - <https://cedproject.org>. Please check them out and consider finding a way to help fund the work they do.

From their website, “Based on client feedback and engagement, CEDP developed a model that gave renters facing eviction a single point of contact for stability services. The program integrated intake and navigation, rapid rental aid payments, eviction legal defense, and, when necessary, rehousing support. During the pandemic, this model served over 31,000 people and disbursed over \$100 million in rental assistance.”

Regards,
Karin Hall
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I am Chaer Robert, Legislative Director for Colorado Center on Law and Policy.

We support SB 184-Protections for Residential Tenants.

In this testimony, I am specially addressing Section 1, which would prohibit requiring a prospective tenant's income to exceed 125% of rent.

Currently, many landlords require a tenant demonstrate income of 3 times rent. If a landlord in Colorado were to limit tenants to those who paid not more than 30% of income to rent in 2021, they would exclude 55.8% of renters (who paid more than 30% of their rent on income that year).

A person working 40 hours at Colorado **minimum wage** makes **\$2371 month**. If a prospective tenant must make 3x income, they could only rent an apartment which rents for less than **\$790 /month**

Approximately 87,507 Coloradans receive **Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)** benefits per month, which is 1.5 percent of the state's population. The average SSDI payment is **\$1430 per month**, so an individual receiving SSDI could only qualify for rent of **\$476 per month**.

66,926 Coloradans received **Supplemental Security Income**, approximately 1 percent of the state's population. The average SSI check is **\$914 per month**, so SSI recipients could only qualify for a unit that rents for less than **\$305 per month**.

Less than ¼ of those qualified for subsidized housing are able to get subsidized housing.

Due to lack of deeply affordable housing in most parts of Colorado, low-income renters often spend more than half their income on rent.

Some key findings from CCLP's 2022 issue brief : [Colorado is Losing Low Cost Affordable Housing](#)

- Between 2010 and 2019, Colorado lost 41.2 percent of rental units with rents under \$600. This housing would be considered affordable to households earning up to \$24,000 in 2019. That year, 23.0 percent of renter households had incomes below \$24,000 in Colorado.
- Low-cost rental housing represented 10.1 percent of Colorado's rental housing stock in 2019, down from 19.5 percent in 2010.
- Only 5.9 percent of rental units built in Colorado since 2010 had rents under \$600. 66.1 percent of rental units built since then had rents between \$1,000 and \$1,999.
- 33.4 percent of rental units in rural counties in Colorado had rents under \$600 in 2019 compared to 9.7 percent of rental units in urban counties. Urban counties accounted for 93.6 percent of the net loss in Colorado's stock of low-cost rental units between 2010 and 2019.
- While all regions of the state saw net losses of low-cost rental units, the fastest losses were experienced in urban Front Range regions. The Denver Metro region alone accounted for 60.0 percent of the net loss in low-cost units between 2010 and 2019.

- Sixteen of Colorado's 64 counties saw net gains in their stock of low-cost rent housing between 2010 and 2019 led by Rio Grande, Archuleta, Moffat, Clear Creek, and Costilla counties. The sixteen counties saw a net gain of 1,727 units with rents below \$600. However, the remaining 48 counties saw net losses of 91,099 units.

While it is not ideal to pay more than 30% of income for rent, for many renters, that is how they stay housed when most of the state has very high rents: by prioritizing rent payment first.

Please support SB 184. Thank you.

Testimony as Submitted in Support of SB23-184: Protections for Residential Tenants by Hunter Nelson, Policy Analyst at the Colorado Children’s Campaign

Senate Local Government & Housing Committee

April 11, 2023

2:00pm

SCR 352

Dear Madam Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Hunter Nelson, and I am a Policy Analyst at the Colorado Children’s Campaign. We are a nonprofit, nonpartisan policy, research, and advocacy organization dedicated to realizing every chance for every child in Colorado. Together with our partner organizations and communities across the state, we advocate for public policies and investments that remove barriers for the most impacted children and families and improve well-being for every child and every family.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB23-184 “Protections for Residential Tenants.” The Children’s Campaign supports this bill because the skyrocketing cost of housing in Colorado continues to greatly impact families with children, and the stress of housing instability negatively impacts children’s emotional and physical health and development, academic achievement, and general well-being. The Colorado Health Institute found that the affordability and stability of housing are some of the biggest challenges for families with children in our state.¹

Incomes in our state have not kept pace with the rising cost of living, including housing costs. This makes it extremely difficult for families to find and maintain stable housing. Requirements imposed on renters, including burdensome security deposits and rent multipliers, create additional barriers. SB23-184 would help relieve some of these burdens for families. Colorado families should not have to struggle to make ends meet. Given the severe negative impacts of housing insecurity and homelessness for children and families, it is critical that we prioritize immediate solutions to help avoid this destabilizing and traumatizing experience.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development found that the number of people in families with children in Colorado shelters increased by 16% between 2020 and 2021, among the largest absolute increases across states between those years.² Colorado must advance multiple solutions to improve access to safe, stable housing for children and families. This bill will remove some of the immediate barriers to housing for families with children in Colorado, helping to prevent homelessness and allowing for greater housing stability and better health outcomes. **Please vote yes on SB23-184.**

Thank you,

Hunter Nelson

¹ [Housing Equity for Web.pdf \(coloradohealthinstitute.org\)](#)

² U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2022, Feb). The 2021 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress.

Hunter Nelson, MSW

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