
From: LESLEY DESNOYERS [REDACTED]
Sent: September 16, 2024 2:09 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: subject of fixed term lease and capped rent

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To Whom it may concern,

I have owned 3 rental properties for 12 years now. I have worked hard all my career and have taken equity out of my family home to use as down payments for my rentals. I have loved being a landlord and my motto has always been to provide housing that I would want to live in myself. As a result, I have spent the full income every one of those 12 years to upgrade the houses and some years have borrowed money for larger renovations. This was manageable until Covid when expenses started to rise significantly. My insurance premiums alone have risen 75% in the past 5 years. Property taxes and maintenance costs have also risen significantly.

I personally have used a fixed term lease on a couple of occasions short-term to determine if a tenant was suitable when they had no or questionable references. On both of those occasions, the tenants were good long-term tenants. If you take away fixed term leases, it will be much more difficult for people on the margins to get a rental as this is a tool that can be used by landlords. I would not have given either of those tenants a chance if I did not have a fixed-term lease option. If you eliminate this, landlords will have such strict screening processes that anyone with poor credit or references will have no chance of getting housing.

The length of time it takes to get an eviction has risen significantly. That is scary because the longer a problem tenant is allowed to stay, the more damage they can create and the more money they owe. From experience, I know that the likelihood of being able to collect from a residential tenancies court award is very slim. I have only been able to collect on one case, three others are outstanding and I have no hope of collecting the \$32,000 owed.

I have always kept rents low and raised them only sporadically and minimally. Now I am stuck with some significantly undervalued rents and expenses that have increased exponentially with no way to raise rents legally beyond the 5%. I have had to raise rents for new tenants close to market value, which I hate doing because it seems exorbitant but I need to subsidize the lower rents. I would love to install heat pumps for my tenants using oil heat, but I cannot afford to. I am being forced to incur debt to subsidize the houses and with the mortgage rates increasing, I may need to sell. That will surely force my tenants to the street because no one will purchase and keep low-paying tenants. I wish I could raise the rent a higher percentage and allow them to stay in their homes. But I cannot afford to keep losing money every year. Please help good landlords provide safe,

clean housing by eliminating the rent cap or at least leveling the field by allowing an increase that is reasonable for the increased expenses.

With kind regards and hope for the future,
Lesley Desnoyers
Land owner in Kentville NS