

Phone messages (Ward 6)

Chue Kue feels that CM Jalali is rushing the resolution with no community input. He's concerned about lawsuits against landlords in the future from potential victims of tenants with criminal backgrounds. Is there anything to protect landlords from lawsuits? He also feels that there needs to be more community input before this becomes a city ordinance.

Diane Schray, dianeschray@yahoo.com Idea sucks because this resolution is forcing them to rent to sex offenders and criminals. This resolution is forcing landlords to move out of the St. Paul area to rent in other areas. She understands that affordable housing is a tough issue to handle and supports other affordable housing issue programs, such as Section 8, but doesn't approve of this.

Hello,

I just wanted to voice my concerns and opposition regarding this ordinance you are considering implementing regarding rental restrictions.

I own property in St Paul. I put a lot of time, effort and money into being a conscientious landlord that offers low income people a nice place to live. I participate in the section 8 program and rent to tenants with other housing vouchers as well.

For the city council to consider FORCING landlords to entertain leasing to tenants who don't pay their bills or those who have criminal records is LUDICROUS!!!!

I ask you.....how would you- or the rest of your colleagues feel if I owned a rental home next to yours and rented to someone who committed a crime of sexual abuse of a child?
Or one that has a criminal record of selling drugs or burglarized homes?

I doubt that you or your colleagues would find THIS kind of tenant strengthens the community and that is a neighbor you'd be happy to welcome into your neighborhood.

I regularly have tenants vacate my properties with unpaid rent and thousands of dollars of damages to my investment-even with safeguards of extra deposits etc.

I spend thousands of dollars to comply with the already excessive regulations required by section 8.

I do this because I myself, am a single Mom. I know how tough it can be to be able to make it alone- and for that reason I actively work with these programs. But adding these PUNITIVE ordinances to the already excessive list of items I have to comply with as a compassionate landlord is too much.

You are already losing many landlords with my mindset as they QUICKLY flee the confines of the city of St Paul due to excessive city intrusion.

Taxes go higher each and every year with limited services for it. More and more protection is offered to the tenants and NONE to the landlords who are trying to provide a necessary resource.

With each concerned and sympathetic landlord you lose that are simply fed up with this beaurocratic BS, you are likely going to get new landlords that will NOT participate in section 8 or ANY other programs designed to help the most deserving families.

As far as limiting the amount of damage deposits I can legally charge a tenant I feel this is none of the city's business how I conduct my affairs. If a tenant I'm considering giving a chance to has a documented HISTORY OF NOT PAYING BILLS OR RENT WHY WOULD ANYONE IN THEIR RIGHT MIND NOT ASK FOR ADDITIONAL SECURITY THEY WONT BE CHEATED BY THIS TENANT FOR TAKING A CHANCE ON THEM!!!!

I would like to know when this issue is being discussed for approval. I want to offer my input!!!!

Please advise when this meeting is to occur.

Best regards,
Diane Schray

Hello CM Jane Prince,

I am a resident and landlord in Saint Paul. Please reconsider or slow down your current S.A.F.E. Ordinance, Ord 20-14. This ordinance will most likely have unintended disastrous consequences on our family, neighbors, and community.

Here are my concerns.

1. The study cited for this ordinance is flawed. It only have 98 participants out of the 304,442 in Saint Paul, which is 0.03%. That sample size is hardly a representation of the city. It also miss-represent the Minnesota Multi-Housing Association position. MMHA is against this ordinance.

<https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Mayor%27s%20Office/Fair%20Housing%20Convenings%20Report%20Aug%202019.pdf>

Proposed Solution: Do more studies. Have at least more participants. If there is a lack of participants, it means there is not interest in this ordinance. So please use our resources to fix our pot holes instead of wasting them on regulations that we do not need.

2. (Sec. 193.03. Security deposits) Security Deposit is a risk mitigation tool. If landlords are not allow to mitigate risk through security deposits, landlords will be forced to mitigate that risk through the rent. The tenants will end up paying for this through increase rent. YES, rent will increase.

Proposed Solution:

Have the city put a fund together to help tenants with security deposits, maybe up to 2 or 3 times rent. This will ensure landlords against risk, so there will be no need to increase rent. On top of that, the tenants will no longer have security deposits as barriers to housing.

3. (Sec. 193.04. Applicant screening guidelines for prospective tenants) Loose guidelines will create unsafe environment to other tenants and/or neighbors.

Proposed Solution:

The city should put together a program designed to help ex con or our troubled citizen to find housing. Maybe similar to the section 8 program (which on a side note, I grew up in section 8 housing). The will create specialized landlords what will be more equip to deal with these types of tenants, which will be safe for all, and provide housing and second chances to our fellow community members.

4. (Sec. 193.06. Advance notice of sale (of affordable housing)) 90 Days restrictions will reduce property values, which will reduce property taxes, reducing city funding. If I were to purchase a property with this restriction in place, I would more likely ask for a reduction in price, to offset this cost. There is also a risk cost associated, which will increase rent. Tenants will end up paying for this again. For example, if regular rent is \$1,200, the risk cost would be \$3,600, which would be a \$300 increase in rent. Again again, this will end up hurting the tenants and further our current issues of affordable housing.

Proposed Solution:

Reduce the notice period to 30 or in the winter 60 days.

Please review some of the positions on the city website.

https://stpaul.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4386792&GUID=CAC11254-88C1-4CE0-BBF5-FE35D52366E8&fbclid=IwAR2K-axUjXI-M-dzn8Y788be78chePbJFud34Ikh14j7V_fubBm-taEq9Z0

Final Thoughts:

The issue of Stable, Accessible, Fair, and Equitable housing in Saint Paul will not be solved by unfairly regulating and restricting landlords. The cost associated with regulating landlords will ultimately get passed onto the tenants. I was already forced to raise rent \$20-\$50 per unit because of the trash restriction. I rent most of my properties to my close and extended family members. And this ordinance will end up hurting them. The truth is that as a landlord, these regulations will not affect me much, but will surely affect our community members, your constituents.

So, please put a pause on Ordinance 20-14, until more research and community engagement has been achieve.

I would love to have a face-to-face discussion with you at any time. Please let me know when you are available to chat.

Thank you Jane, and thanks for serving our community.

Tou Fang

Councilmember Dai Thao-Ward 1
Councilmember Rebecca Noecker-Ward 2
Councilmember Chris Tolbert-Ward 3
Councilmember Mitra Jalali- Ward 4
Councilmember Amy Brendmoen-Ward 5
Councilmember Nelsie Yang-Ward 6
Councilmember Jane L. Prince-Ward 7

RE: S.A.F.E

Although there are elements of the proposed ordinance that we support and currently self implement, there are major components which we vehemently opposed.

Sec. 193.04 Applicant screening guidelines for prospective tenants

This section is flawed, overreaching and is counter to our company's goal of providing safe housing to those who choose to make our apartments their home.

(b)

This section carefully states what offenses are and are not acceptable reasons for denial as well as sets periods of expiration for those offenses that are allowed. However it does not provide a quantitative measure for owners. As written there is no limit to the number of offenses allowed as long as they occurred outside the set periods of expiration or are considered allowable offenses.

As written, property owners could not deny housing to an individual released from prison after serving a 10 year concurrent sentence for breaking into his neighbors house, raping a two year old child and setting the home on fire. Absurd?- Sure, but required by this proposed ordinance.

There will be two unintended outcomes if this ordinance passes as written. First, if owners are mandated to rent to criminals as outlined in 193.04 i and j, current residents will move to communities where owners are allowed to implement sound and reasonable rental criteria. Second, rents will rise at a greater rate to cover the cost of doing business in St. Paul.

Sec. 193.05 Just cause notice for tenants

(a)

This section is the most damaging to those of us that provide affordable housing in St. Paul and to our residents. Not renewing a lease is an owner's

right and means to protect our residents as a whole. This should not be compromised.

We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of our comments, invite you to tour our properties, meet our residents and hear from them on how your proposed changes would negatively impact their families.

Sincerely,
Connie and Mike Buskirk
Richards Properties,LLC

Dear CM Brendmoen,

Thank you for your support of the Tenant Protections Ordinance at the hearing yesterday (3/11/20) at the St. Paul City Council.
Your continued support of this bold and important work is appreciated.

Sincerely,
Myrna Nelson (Ward 2)
334 Cherokee Ave
St. Paul, MN 55107
March 11, 2020

Council Member Thao – Ward 1
15 Kellogg Blvd. West
320-C City Hall
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dear Councilmember Thao,

My name is Lori Needels Purdy and I have been a Saint Paul rental property owner for 26 years. I currently own 3 St. Paul rental properties with a total of 6 rental units. I rent these units for market rate. These properties are in Wards 1, 3, & 4. The combined property taxes I paid on them in 2019 totaled \$18,573.

I believe education is key to the solution of many challenges. Increased promotion and accessibility to tenant resources and tenants rights education will help lessen St. Paul's housing crisis by creating enabled and informed tenants. That is why I want you to know that I strongly approve of Ordinance 20-14, Sec. 193.02 – Tenant rights information packets and tenant rights posters.

Nonetheless, I want to delay approval of the proposed Ord. 20-14 pertaining to Tenant Protection. This delay would allow us time to:

- 1) See the effects that similar changes made in Minneapolis have, both positive and negative.
- 2) Explore alternate solutions to the city's lack of affordable housing

- a. Create new and expand current incentives to create more affordable housing from current supply.
 - b. Create more builder incentives to add to the current affordable housing supply.
- 3) Decide if new ordinance is the best solution, and if so, make changes to the flawed elements in it.

Flawed elements in the proposed Ord. 20-14 and why:

- 1) Sec. 193.03(a) Security Deposit Limitations, – Limiting the security deposit to one month's rent will result in an increase of rental rates, especially in rentals with lower than average rental rates. Landlords affected by this ordinance will be forced to raise rents in order to have an appropriate amount of security deposit to protect themselves from losses due to damages and cleaning costs. I urge you to remove this limitation or increase the limitation amount to at least 1.5 times monthly rent.
- 2) Sec 193.05(2) Just Cause Notice, Repeated Late Payment of Rent – Forcing landlords to allow 5 late rent payments in a 12 month period is excessive. Ask yourself – Would you want to stay at a job where 41% or close to every other paycheck to you was paid late? That is exactly what is being forced on landlords. I would like to see this decreased to 3 allowable late rent payments in a 12 month period.
- 3) Sec 193.05(7) Just Cause Notice, Rehab and Renovation - The Relocation Assistance payments calculate to \$3150.00 for an efficiency unit up to \$5220.00 for a 4 bedroom unit. I consider these amounts to be so high as to be punitive and believe they will lower the probability and frequency that landlords maintain their properties. Also, "uninhabitable" is a subjective term. What would be some rehab and renovation examples that fit a legal definition of "uninhabitable"? And also some that don't? I believe the Relocation Assistance requirement for Rehab and Renovation Just Cause Notice requirement should be deleted altogether.

Please take these points into consideration and do not approve Ordinance 20-14 as it currently is.

Sincerely,
Lori Needels Purdy

Dai Thao,

Please exempt personal service landlords - landlords who own 10 or fewer units and manage them personally - from this proposed ordinance. These small owners provide most of the small-building - houses up to fourplexes - rentals that low-income families need and want. If you don't exempt this type of owner, the damages and legal fees caused by a few irresponsible, judgment-proof tenants will run them out of business. Privately-offered small-building rentals will cease to exist in St. Paul. One method for entrepreneurial families to build wealth will be destroyed. Ultimately, the people who will suffer the most are responsible but low-income/low-asset renter families, who will be relegated to apartment complexes and high-rises. Poverty will become more concentrated.

The only people this ordinance helps are tenants who damage their homes, don't pay their rent, and disturb their neighbors. Please limit this ill-considered ordinance to the big corporate landlords, who can better absorb their losses from those types of tenants.

I am writing from my experience as a personal-service landlord for the last 48 years. I am no longer your constituent; as of January 1, I have moved to Wisconsin. I no longer own or manage any real estate in Minnesota. If you favor this ordinance, I am writing to inform you and to ask you to urge an amendment; if you don't favor this ordinance, I am writing to give you support to oppose it.

Jean Schroepfer
formerly of 271 Summit

I've been out of MN for a few months and just saw something on this initiative. As an owner-occupant of a duplex, I am extremely interested in whether or not provisions regarding "just cause" will apply to owner-occupied duplexes. I've been a landlord since 1985 and it has been important to me to be sharing my property with compatible people, and to not be forced into such close contact with people who are irresponsible or simply unpleasant. For example, I have had female college graduates who were too irresponsible to fully close the front door and fence gates, which compromised our safety and endangered my dog, and a recent tenant screamed at me several times when I discussed enforcing provisions in the lease she had signed. When I saw the Minneapolis related ordinance changes, without studying the details, I thought I would sell my duplex if it were in Minneapolis. I fully understand the reason for the proposed changes, but think applying the "just cause" and maybe some of the other changes to landlords interacting daily with renters is unfair to landlords.

In any case, I'd like to see any ordinance language as it develops and to be kept updated on timelines, etc. Thank you.

Mary Antonia Wilmes
1393 Berkeley Av.

I expect this, like other matters, will get postponed due to the Corona Virus, but here goes. I have made a few specific comments at the end but frankly any reasonable adult reading the ordinance who knows anything about landlord-tenant issues will understand how unworkable it is. I am furious about this and have lost sleep over it. **The ordinance needs to be discarded and reasonable people, in consultation with legal consul, need to figure out how to solve some of the city's problems without putting the burden entirely on property owner-landlords. This ordinance is unfair and won't solve the problems.**

1. Please have a city lawyer (one who's smarter than the one who gave advice on the trash ordinance v. right of referendum, etc.) review the entire proposed ordinance. **I don't think the City has jurisdiction over these issues**, since the State has laws on Landlord-Tenant Rights. I also think that there are constitutional issues; the "just cause" provision in my mind constitutes a "taking of private property" under real estate law.

2. **I believe that the entire ordinance should have an exclusion for owner-occupied duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes.** If renters don't like a criminal neighbor or one who is fighting with a partner all the time, is just nasty in person, etc., that renter can find another place to live. Living in my owner-occupied duplex, I don't have that choice. I have to see, maybe on a daily basis, my tenant. I share the patio, the lawn, the garden, the basement, the common areas with him/her/them.

3. Both the Mpls and St. Paul ordinances emphasize that there are now more renters than property owners. I can only think that the meaning is there are more renter-voters than property owners who vote.

4. If you wonder what problems I have with this ordinance, consider the following. I moved into its second floor as a renter in 1984 and bought the entire building in 1985. After buying it for \$95,000, I have spent at least \$250,000 in improvements in this property. My taxes with assessments are over \$8400 per year. During all this time, I have been very careful in choosing tenants. I have not discriminated by race, religion, or gender preference. I have discriminated against families with children, as MN Statutes allow me to. I needed and still need a quiet peaceful home and that is what I got, for the

most part. I am a 76 year old retired family lawyer and am particularly sensitive to loud noises, especially domestic arguments.

Just think of what you appreciate in your neighbors, and those are the qualities I want and have mostly been able to have in my tenants for what is now 35 years. I did have some irresponsible tenants who didn't take good care of my property, left trash on the patio regularly, slopped paint on my washer, didn't fully latch the door or the gate, and I certainly appreciated being able to make a decision about whether or not to do another lease with them. The most recent tenants were a lovely man and his nasty wife, who screamed at me a number of times, unhappy about the lease provisions they had signed. So when I wrote the most recent lease, I wrote it only for the husband, believing as he did that a divorce was imminent and in any case being unwilling to deal with the wife on any issue. Under this ordinance, I suppose I couldn't have done that. Some ten years ago, I evicted a tenant; that was the only time, and she actually was an acquaintance who couldn't pay the rent. How dare the City limit my right to do that when I depend on that rental income!

5. My "big idea" is that you pass this ordinance to apply only to public housing and see how that works. I don't think the City has the right to solve its problems on the back of private property owners; let's see them try these "great ideas" on public housing. I would prefer to pay taxes for more public housing, and I think it is unethical and illegal to put the burden on private property owners, especially those who are sharing their home and lawn and gardens with renters.

6. If an ordinance like this passes, I will probably convert my rental space into an Airbnb (whether or not the ordinance says I can't non-renew). I doubt I will be the only landlord who makes this decision; thus, the properties available for long term renters will be fewer. Alternately, I will substantially raise my rent. I now am charging \$1500/month and know I could get more. Because I can charge good rent, I realize I am less vulnerable to some of the problems this ordinance will create, but that doesn't make them the right thing to do.

7. I am quite confident that there will be much litigation over this if the Council proceeds with its process to approve it; I would hope the Councilmembers all read it first; they could save much legal costs.

A. Screening Guidelines.

1. Criminal History. I don't know much about criminal law, and this provision was never an issue; in fact, I never checked for criminal history, but the language would seem to require me to accept sex offenders after the right number of years had passed. I suggest this provision be checked in government housing first.

2. Credit History. No government entity should have the right to tell me what credit history I can use, unless they plan to hold me harmless in case I get stiffed for rent and/or incur extra expenses having to evict people.

3. Rental History. This isn't likely to be an issue for me.

B. Just cause notice.; this is the big problem! This provision is unworkable in total. The provisions were obviously written by rents with no consideration for landlords, who depend on timely rent payments, but I don't understand why the entire Council is spending time and energy with it.

It cannot be legal for the City to tell a landlord when they can non-renew. Notice that Minneapolis didn't address any of these provisions. Do they have smarter lawyers?

Five late payments to be grounds for termination! Ridiculous.

Refusal to renew after the lease expired? This language must have been written by an eighth grader. Think about how that would work. I might not know until after the lease ends whether the tenant planned to stay? I have a 60 day requirement; tenants and I need to sign a new lease 60 days before the lease ends. If we don't, I need to start advertising for new tenants, so I have someone ready to move in the day after the lease ends.

Rehab and renovation. I can't non-renew so I can rehab the space without providing Relocation Assistance? Ridiculous.

Mary Antonia Wilmes
1393 Berkeley Av.

3/24/2020

Hello Councilmember Dai Thao,

My name is Olivia Grajeda, and I'm writing to express my strong support for the S.A.F.E. Housing Tenant Protections ordinance currently before the city council.

Renters make up 51% of Saint Paul residents, and they are disproportionately younger, lower-income, and people of color. Because of decades of disinvestment, racially discriminatory housing policy, and exclusionary practices, they are facing a housing crisis that demands comprehensive action. The time for tenant protections is now.

These tenant protections directly address the most common challenges renters are facing like discrimination during the screening process, informal evictions through non-renewal of leases, abrupt notice to vacate, and more. They combine existing best practices in the market with policies that have been shown to have an impact in other cities.

Tenant protections are aimed at giving more people access to the housing they need and preventing families from being displaced from the housing they already have. They are not meant to solve our housing crisis all on their own. They are part of a sweeping set of strategies including rent supplements, landlord incentives like 4d and the new risk mitigation fund, and production of affordable units that are meant to tackle our housing crisis.

I hope you will stand up for the renters in this city (over half the city) by voting for the S.A.F.E. Housing Tenant Protections ordinance as is without watering down the protections we are granting to renters.

I represent older citizens that need and deserve reasonable, affordable and secure rent in our capitol city.
Sincerely,

Olivia Grajeda
852 Selby Ave
55104

Dear Council Member Noecker,

My name is Kristen Herndon and I'm a homeowner on Belvidere Street on the West Side. I am a huge supporter of the proposed tenant protections, and ask that you vote yes on the ordinance.

I moved to St. Paul from Wisconsin in 2012 and was a renter until buying my home in 2017. The move to the city wouldn't have been possible for me without rental opportunities. That being said, I faced a lot of hardships due to the lack of protection currently in law in support of tenants. I'm sending this email in support of half of our city's residents who are renters, and because I believe renters specifically on the West Side are important to this neighborhood's development and should be treated as a part of the community.

Thanks very much for your time. Please vote yes for tenant protections! Take care!

*Best,
Kristen Herndon*

Mitra

VOTE YES!

Christopher Colantti
1452 Hythe Street
Saint Paul, MN

April 27, 2020
Chris Tolbert
Saint Paul City Council
City Hall
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Council Member Tolbert:

I write to support changes in Chapter 193 of the Legislative Code pertaining to tenant protections. I am now a homeowner in Ward 3 and have friends and family who are both renters and landlords. I was also the project director of Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid's Housing Discrimination Law Project for many years and have been deeply involved with representing tenants in cases and with local, state and federal housing and civil rights issues.

As a member of the St. Paul Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity Commission, I heartily endorse the Commission's letter in support of the proposal, in particular the part stressing the importance of limiting criminal background screening to relevant time-periods and behaviors. I refer you to that letter for a full discussion of that issue. I will summarize by saying that limiting this screening will open housing to families of color and people with disabilities who are often badly affected by such practices, without undue hardship to others. I will also point out that if there is just cause, those people, like renters without criminal records, can be evicted or their leases not renewed.

I also support the other provisions of the proposal. I understand that the just cause for termination provision is controversial among some. The most common basis for termination is now failure to pay rent. Landlords may still evict for this reason. Lease terminations can occur for material lease violations and I think few would wish to pursue evictions for immaterial violations. Giving a tenant a chance to cure a problem is humane and is just a good business practice.

I have a suggestion for an adjustment to the limit on damage deposits charged to tenants proposed for 193.03. St. Paul should include the option of tenants to pay a larger deposit in order to secure a home -- if their application was otherwise declined after equal

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application of fair screening standards. While my suggestion is not limited to legally mandated reasonable accommodations in the screening process for people with

disabilities, reasonable accommodation in rental negotiations is a common occurrence where permitting higher deposits can often be helpful. I think that such an adjustment will assist both tenants and owners.

I think that the portion of the proposal addressing rent-to-income ratio (which has little or no basis) should be adjusted. The policy should not put the burden of showing capacity to pay more than 40% of income on renters. While some may be able to show this, that is not true for the newly jobless or recently disabled renter. There is also a problem with not differentiating according to income source, which I address below. According to the March 2018 report of the St. Paul Working Group on Fair Housing at page 9, half of all renters and half of people of color in St. Paul pay more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of their income in rent (a 3:1 ratio). A full 27% live with at least a 2:1 income to rent ratio. The proposal at 193.04 (b) (3) (b), for a 2.5:1 screening ratio legitimates presumptively excluding most of them from renting their current (or next similarly-priced) homes on this basis alone. This is not justifiable.

Because of the huge disparity in incomes, use of such a ratio would surely negatively impact people with disabilities, renters of color and young families. A one bedroom apartment in St. Paul rents for more than \$1000 and would require at least \$2500 in income using this rule. A worker in a small business at our new minimum wage would have to work 58 hours a week to qualify to rent such an apartment. The income:rent ratio idea is no more than a rule of thumb going back more than 150 years and is without empirical support. According to the only scholar who has researched

this, Dr. Hulchanski ¹, there is:
absolute lack of validity any ratio ... as a universal measure or
indicator of
housing need and ability to pay. No ratio as a generalisable statement
about
affordability makes any empirical sense. Any ratio used is, therefore,
simply
arbitrary. ²

¹ http://www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/pdfs/researchassociates/Hulchanski_Concept-H-Affd_H.pdf

² Id.

2

What to do short of outlawing its use?

First, it has no place at all in screening of subsidized tenants or
apartments.

Second, in view of the current rent burdens already borne by many St.
Paul renters, I

think that the ratio be set at 2:1.

Third, income must be defined in a way that takes into account the way
certain household

incomes work. For example people with disability often receive non-
taxable Social

Security income - their income can purchase more housing than comparable
wages which

have payroll deductions before they pay rent. HUD addresses this in its
mortgage

insurance program by requiring "grossing up" the non-taxable income by
25% (or the

person's prior tax rate) So a social security check of \$800 should ³ be
"grossed up" to

\$1000. The same concept is applied to child support income by HUD. Many
households also get SNAP food assistance - on average \$250 per month -
this must also

be included and "grossed up" in calculating the ratio. Energy
assistance is another

complicating factor. Finally, and here the value is harder to set -
people who have

subsidized medical care have more of their income to spend on rent.

Households on

Medicare, Minnesota Care, VA benefits, etc. should have their ratios calculated taking this into account.

Perhaps as an alternative to individualized and likely error-prone calculations, the ordinance could limit owners to using a 1.5:1 ratio for persons receiving non-taxable income and other benefits.

I believe that Saint Paul should clarify the Human Rights Ordinance to ensure that people not be denied homes or otherwise discriminated against in rentals because part of their rent comes from other sources, most commonly Section 8 or Housing Choice vouchers.

The Minneapolis ordinance changes provide a good model to protect these families, reduce segregation and address potential business concerns of owners and managers. (It has been upheld by the Minnesota Court of Appeals and the argument before our Supreme Court seemed to bode well for the City's position.)

³Handbook 4155.14E.5.b

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With respect to the housing choice voucher situation in our city, the March 2018 report of the St. Paul Working Group on Fair Housing states at pages 20 and 21: The majority of participants in the Housing Choice Voucher are members of protected classes - people of color, people with disabilities, and families with young children. The purpose of the HCV program is to both expand housing choice and promote racial and ethnic integration.

However:

15% of the people awarded a voucher lost that opportunity because they were unable to place their voucher during the 60-day placement window... (and) about

two-thirds (emphasis added) of vouchers are placed in areas with a lower-median income and a majority of people of color. Enacting a change to our Human Rights Ordinance like that in Minneapolis would make a significant difference for thousands of children and their families by increasing the total number of and geographic range of their choice of homes. While I know that this amendment may not make this package of reforms, it should be debated soon.

Thank you for your attention to low income housing and human rights concerns in Saint Paul. Please call me to discuss these issues as the Council's deliberations move ahead.
651-431-1477.

Sincerely,

James Wilkinson

1388 Goodrich Av.

St. Paul, MN 55105

jewilkinsoniii@gmail.com

c. c. Mayor Carter

City Council members

Valerie Jensen, Director, HREEO

Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity Commissioners

Dear Council Member Jalali,

My name is Brian Martinson, and I'm a resident, homeowner and constituent of your Ward. I am also a former landlord of a duplex in St.

Paul. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul, and because I already know I can count on your vote in support of the ordinance, I want to say THANK YOU for your work on its development.

One element not included in the ordinance, but that I hope might be considered for future work in this area, is a provision to give existing tenants something like "first right of refusal" when a property is being sold. For some tenants residing in single-family, duplex, and triplex buildings, this could provide a meaningful path to their own home-ownership.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits will help ensure nobody is screened or shut out of a place to live they could otherwise afford
- Just cause notice will standardize landlord best practices to ensure a legally defined and acceptable just cause is the reason for terminating a tenancy, curbing arbitrary and informal evictions and helping people stay in their homes
- Advance notice of sale will slow down the rapid loss of NOAH in our communities that is fueling displacement and give preservation and affordable buyers more time to bring forth deals that could help tenants stay housed and improve our city
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information will dramatically improve landlord-tenant relationships and help make sure every renter in our city knows what their rights and resources are

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now.

Thank you for all you do for our city!

Brian C. Martinson, PhD
1943 Princeton Ave

Dear Mitra,

My name is David Wolfson and I live in Ward 4. I'd like to express my support for the proposed tenant protections and ask that you vote yes on the S.A.F.E. ordinance. Why I'm currently a homeowner, I've rented multiple times in Ward 4 and think that the power dynamic between landlords and renters is dangerously skewed to protect the landlords instead of the renters.

Thank you very much,

David

Hello,

I am a former renter that currently lives in Midway emailing to express my support for the SAFE renter protection program.

I strongly believe these five protections should be in place to support renters.

I hope you support SAFE too.

Emily Shepard, 1351 Lafond

Councilmember Thao,

I manage rental property in your Ward and am against creating chapter 193 of the Legislative Code (Title XIX) pertaining to Tenant Protections.

I am highly disheartened by the work the City of Saint Paul staff did in developing the proposed Tenant Protections ordinance. Not only did they ignore all the input from property managers received this last summer and fall, but they developed an ordinance which will ultimately increase property taxes for homeowners of Saint Paul and reduce affordable housing in Saint Paul.

Having the City of Saint set the screening criteria for management companies will cause rents to go up. There are people who damage apartments and do not pay rent, that is why property management companies have screening criteria. If the City of Saint Paul makes it so property management companies can no longer effectively screen people who will not pay rent, then rents will be increased to not only deter people who cannot pay the rent, but also to cover the extra costs associated with the effects of the City's requirements. Changing screening criteria will reduce affordable housing in Saint Paul, and cause rental property values to go down and property taxes for homeowners to increase.

Having the City of Saint Paul limit what criminal offenses are denied will cause more criminals to move to the Saint Paul and non-criminals to leave the Saint Paul. There are many misdemeanor-level offenses relating to sexual attacks and stalking that the proposed ordinance would require be ignored. This will not only cause rental property values to go down and property taxes for homeowners to increase but will also make it more difficult for low income renters to find apartments. In Seattle about 40 percent of landlords reported that they have already adopted stricter rental requirements.

Limiting security deposits and pre-paid rent will cause an increase to monthly rents. The extra security deposits and prepaid fees help offset potential future non-payments from residents that are at higher risk of not paying rent. If these fees are limited, then property managers will have to increase the rent and collect the fees every month to help offset future non-payments. In Seattle over 20% of landlords that increased rent said that one of the reasons was their City's similar rental ordinances. This will reduce affordable housing in Saint Paul.

Is this correct to say that if I want to renovate a unit, I have to give a resident 3 months notice, and I also have to pay the resident a relocation amount equal to three times the Met Council Affordability limit

(for a 1br this is 3 times \$1,124 which comes to \$3,372)? This will promote the deterioration of apartments in Saint Paul. This will cause rental property values to go down and property taxes for homeowners to increase.

I do not believe a resident should be allowed to pay rent late 5 months in a year and a management company is not allowed to give them notice. If someone consistently pays rent late that typically means they are in an apartment that is too expensive. This will cause late fees to increase because property owners still must pay their bills. The increase late fees will then lead to more evictions. This will cause rental property values to go down and property taxes for homeowners to increase.

Just cause notice will cause many respectful renters to move out of Saint Paul, because residents who cause conflict and trouble at a property will be more difficult to give notice to move. However, it will be easy for the non-conflict residents to give notice and move to properties where there are less issues. This will cause rental property values to go down and property taxes for homeowners to increase.

The extra work for owners of affordable housing to report a sale and purchase, will be a burden that may cause less properties to stay, or become affordable housing. This will decrease the amount of affordable housing in Saint Paul.

Overall the proposed ordinance will burden small local owners and cause them to sell to large national companies. This then reduces our Saint Paul's economy, because small owners spend more in their communities than large companies. My family has managed apartments in Saint Paul for over 70 years. I personally can see this ordinance as being a reason for my family and many others to retire from this business. In Seattle about 40% of landlords have sold, or plan to sell, property in response to their City's similar ordinances governing the housing market.

Here are my recommendations:

If there is not enough affordable housing in Saint Paul, then focus your efforts on allocating funds to build more.

If residents of this City are having trouble renting because of poor credit scores and criminal history, then provide community outreach on personal finance and respectful citizenship.

If renters have many late payments, the City should work with renters to find apartments that they can afford and resources to help them budget their money.

What frustrates me about this ordinance is that the City staff and Council members that put this together and submitted it to the Council most likely did zero research on the impacts these types of ordinances have had in other Cities. I am willing to bet that no one read the University of Washington's Seattle Housing Rental Study, published in 2018.

What frustrates me more is that this ordinance was brought to the Saint Paul City Council with zero public input. The City held several public meetings this last summer to discuss safe housing, but none of the language in this proposal was discussed at those meeting. If you look at the public comments to date

regarding this proposed ordinance, it is more than apparent that the people involved with developing this ordinance did not seek any input from the residents of Saint Paul affected by it. I had hoped that since we are a democratic government and have groups like Saint Paul STRONG, our City Council will become more transparent. My hope has been ruined. I fully expect you, the Saint Paul City Council, to completely ignore all the comments against this ordinance and pass it.

Chad Skally
Saint Paul Resident and Rental Property Manager

Dear Council President Brendmoen and Council Members,

I am in strong support of the SAFE Housing Tenant Protections ordinance currently before the city council. I urge you to support this measure.

The majority of St. Paul residents rent their homes and they deserve the essential security a stable home provides. Our renters are more likely than average to be lower-income, people of color, and younger. It's essential to protect their access to housing so they can build family stability and wealth to mutually benefit our community.

I am an investor in multifamily housing and I understand the business implications for landlords. On balance I feel this ordinance is a small inconvenience for owners and a potentially life-changing protection for residents.

Respectfully,
Kevin Gallatin
1822 Highland Pkwy

Hello,

My name is Michelle Messer and I am a resident of Ward 2. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections and I want to express to the council members what passing this ordinance means to our community.

I work for St Catherine University and I have students every year express concerns about housing and the impacts housing insecurity has on their success as a student and their ability to achieve their goals.

- Especially students who have not had time to build strong credit histories, the proposed changes to screening criteria will mean many students who have been categorically excluded will now have opportunity in many of the neighborhoods surrounding campus.
- I hear regularly how security deposits equaling two to three months rent make it impossible for students to sign leases. Especially with full time students, the ability to work high wage jobs, the kind that give you a few grand in savings for a security deposit, is not the norm.
- In the last year, I have heard personal stories of students who found out the property where they had been living for years was going up for sale with very little time in advance. Finding new housing on the fly, especially housing that doesn't carry exorbitant deposits or ultra-

stringent screening, is a near impossible feat in this city. Students facing that circumstances with the significant added stress have a very hard time managing.

Housing is one of the most essential needs; and secure housing with the most rudimentary protections, like just cause notice, is absolutely essential to the kind of community St Paul strives to be. In this time challenge there is also a clear opportunity to build a stronger safety net for my neighbors and your constituents. Please don't pass on this opportunity to do what's best for our city.

Thank you,

Michelle Messer
michelleerinmesser@gmail.com
369 Grand Avenue

Hello Council,

I'm deeply in favor of tenant protections put forth in ordinance 20-14. What this ordinance puts forward is all good. Nearly every problem addressed in the list of solutions offered by this ordinance is one that's been inflicted on me by a Saint Paul landlord at one point or another living here.

I've had ludicrously big security deposits surcharged to nothing by post move out with fees that all evaporated when challenged with photos.

I was accidentally evicted by a landlord who just forgot to file our lease renewal, I only found out when the maintenance guy waltzed in and proclaimed "Oh... you're still here."

I had my home of 5 years sold out from under me after Fred Melo wrote an article about a hot real estate market. I could have afforded that rickety little house too.

I've been screwed time and again by the landlords in this town, and I've barely been able to defend myself and I'm a guy in the know! Tenants deserve rights, and they deserve to have them enumerated. Folks who can't afford to buy a home in this increasingly expensive town deserve a fair shake. They deserve a chance to defend themselves against an industry that tries to squeeze every last dime from them.

Furthermore, y'all should take this further, you need to be talking about and advocating for things like expanded public housing, rent control, and more homeless shelters. You are just going to be trapped in this endless loop of plot by plot development squabbling until you stop fighting piece by piece and start making big strides. The market will not save us, the landlords are not your friends, and until you do something gutsy to solve our housing crisis you will be stuck in the most interminable aggravating variance obsessed council meetings for the rest of your tenure.

Tom Basgen,
659 Wilder st s.
Highland Park

This is such a strange, stressful time and the burden is falling heavily on low-income people and renters. Please support tenant protections that keep people in their homes instead of worsening this crisis and low-income people's burden. I trust you to do the right thing and appreciate everything you've done to move Saint Paul forward.

Celeste Marin
753 Bradley St.
Saint Paul, MN 55130
Celeste

Hello all,
I'm writing to voice my support for the tenant protections ordinance (20-14). I've had the privilege of living in the same place for 20 years, thanks to home ownership. Home ownership is not accessible or desirable to many people, and they absolutely deserve the same stability of housing that homeowners enjoy.

Thank you,
Jessy Needles
Ward 4

Hi,
I'm writing in support of the tenant protections being heard by the council. Everyone deserves a safe home, whether they own or rent.

Thank you,
Sarah McGee
Saint Paul

Dear Council,

I am reaching out to voice my support for the Tenant Protections ordinance 20-14. I have lived in St. Paul for Six years and think that Tenant Protections would be a great step towards building a healthier St. Paul.

Thanks,
Ana
Ana Diaz

Hello,

My name is Mara Kilgore and I live in Ward 2 in the West 7th neighborhood. I'm writing in support of the Tenant Protections Ordinance 20-14. I believe all five policies in the ordinance are desperately needed. Tenants are a very vulnerable class, and we make up over half of the city's residents. When landlords have more rights than us, we can be easily taken advantage of. Housing is a basic human right and it should not be exploited for profit. We need enforced standards like a security deposit cap, just cause notice, and advance notice of sales because without them, a landlord's right to profit is given priority over a person's right to housing.

Every person deserves a home, and I believe it is the city's responsibility to ensure that no one is taken advantage of when they are seeking this basic right. Please protect our city's tenants - more than 50% of St. Paul's residents - and pass ordinance 20-14.

Sincerely,
Mara Kilgore
734 Stewart Ave

Hello!

I'm Casey Peterson, a long-time resident of Ward 4 in Saint Paul. And I'm writing in support of Tenant Protections.

I've been fortunate enough to have mostly good landlords throughout my life, but the ones who've been bad have been really bad.

Choosing to rent, rather than buy a home, is a more than valid choice (though it's often less of a choice one gets to make than it is a fact of life). As such, we need to ensure that renters aren't taking advantage of or unreasonably burdened by the whims of landlords.

Renters deserve rights. Please ensure that they have them.

Thanks,
Casey Peterson

Hello Council,

I am a renter and I strongly support the tenant protections in ordinance 20-14.

Thank you,
Jenn Justad
659 Wilder St S.
Highland Park

Dear Council Member X,

My name is Geraldine Rockett and I've owned a home in St. Paul for over 30 years. I am a constituent Ward 4 and leader in ISAIAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits

Just cause notice

Advance notice of sale

Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support and for representing Ward 4.

Jeri Rockett

Hello Councilmember Noecker,

I'm writing today to ask you to vote YES on the Tenant Protections ordinance.

My partner and I recently moved to Ward 2. Our previous landlord gave us notice to vacate the property within 30 days, on a whim. We loved where we lived and were planning on staying there for years. It was our home. But because there were no tenant protections around Just Cause notice, there was nothing we could do but scramble to find a new home and move. In addition, a week after he gave us notice, the pandemic was in full force in Minnesota, meaning that we had to risk our lives and others' lives by moving.

This is only one story. And we were lucky to have the means to afford a move and a community that supported us. Many renters don't have the ability to move on short notice. Many renters wouldn't have been able to move during a pandemic without extreme economic and personal hardship.

Your ward is filled with renters who love living where they live. They are people who deserve more protections so they're not thrown out of their homes on someone's whim. People who deserve more protections so that when they do choose or need to move, they aren't spending all of their savings to cover ridiculous deposits and fees. People who deserve to feel secure in their homes and who don't have to worry every day and night if they'll still be able to be there in a month.

Housing is a human right. It's time for Saint Paul to provide some protections for its tenants. This ordinance is a great place to start and to build on. Please support it by voting yes.

Sincerely,

Lauren Nielsen
1217 Grand Ave

My name is Cambray Crozier and I am a homeowner residing in Ward 4. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul. The pandemic and our current global economic circumstances demonstrate the urgency of taking swift action on these issues in our city. I ask each member of the council to vote yes.

Dear Council Member Amy,

My name is Tim Spanier and I'm a homeowner. I am a constituent of your Ward and leader in ISAI AH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- Just cause notice
- Advance notice of sale
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Tim Spanier

I'm writing to register my support for tenant protections in St. Paul.

Thank you,
Katherine Campbell

Saint Paul City Council,

I am writing to support ordinance 20-14 for tenant protections.

I am about to graduate from St. Thomas and many of my friends and I are anxious about what the future holds, between superfluous rents and negative experiences with landlords, we are nervous about the future.

As a city, we desperately need these protections AT LEAST, and should move forward to discuss deeper solutions like rent control, expansion of public housing, and more shelters for our neighbors without houses. Please continue to create and support solutions to the housing crises we face.

Thank you for what you do,

Bizzy Stephenson
2115 Summit Ave, Saint Paul

I support Tenant Protections in St. Paul because landlords should not have the power to steamroll tenants out of house and home and savings accounts. It's hard enough to survive in this country. Squabbling over money and repairs with landlords while living on the brink of housing insecurity is not something anyone in St. Paul should have to live with, especially for single parents and families with young children.

Thank you,
Matt Keliher
705 Simon Ave, St Paul, MN 55117

Hello Councilmember Jalali

My name is Sheigh Freeberg, and I'm writing to express my strong support for the S.A.F.E. Housing Tenant Protections ordinance currently before the city council.

Renters make up 51% of Saint Paul residents, and they are disproportionately younger, lower-income, and people of color. Because of decades of disinvestment, racially discriminatory housing policy, and exclusionary practices, they are facing a housing crisis that demands comprehensive action. The time for tenant protections is now.

These tenant protections directly address the most common challenges renters are facing like discrimination during the screening process, informal evictions through non-renewal of leases, abrupt notice to vacate, and more. They combine existing best practices in the market with policies that have been shown to have an impact in other cities.

Tenant protections are aimed at giving more people access to the housing they need and preventing families from being displaced from the housing they already have. They are not meant to solve our housing crisis all on their own. They are part of a sweeping set of strategies

including rent supplements, landlord incentives like 4d and the new risk mitigation fund, and production of affordable units that are meant to tackle our housing crisis.

I hope you will stand up for the renters in this city (over half the city) by voting for the S.A.F.E. Housing Tenant Protections ordinance as is without watering down the protections we are granting to renters.

Best,

Sheigh Freeberg
1366 Thomas Ave
St Paul MN

Dear Mitra Jilali

My name is JoAnn Mason, I am a constituent in Ward 4, and a member of Isaiah. I STRONGLY support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

People in our city have a right to housing, and now more than ever we need to help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. We had a housing crisis before Covid-19, and due to renter's inability to pay rent while they are forced to stay home, need these protections:

- *Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- * Just cause notice
- *Advance notice of sale
- *Tenant rights and responsibilities information

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now Thank you for your support

JoAnn Mason

Dear Council Member Jalali,

My name is Joan Haan and I'm a homeowner. I am a constituent of your Ward and leader in ISIAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits

- Just cause notice
- Advance notice of sale
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Joan Haan
2249 Summit Ave.

Councilmember Jalali,

I, and the organization ISAIAH, strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul. I thank you for presenting the "S.A.F.E. HOUSING TENANT PROTECTIONS ORDINANCE." Please ensure that the St. Paul City Council passes it.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- Just cause notice
- Advance notice of sale
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Tim Wulling
St. Anthony Park

Dear Council Member Jalali,

My name is Corinne Freedman Ellis and I'm a homeowner in Hamline-Midway. I am a constituent of your Ward and leader in ISAIAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- Just cause notice
- Advance notice of sale
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Peace,

Corinne
Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis
(she/her/hers)
Minister of Congregational Life
Macalester Plymouth United Church

Dear Council Member Jalali Nelson

My name is Tom Lucy and I'm a Ward 4 resident. I am a constituent of your Ward and leader in ISAIAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- Just cause notice
- Advance notice of sale
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Thomas Lucy
1460 Huron Street
Saint Paul, MN
55108

Dear Ms. Jalali,

My name is Pierre Gingerich-Boberg, and I'm a home-owner in the Hamline-Midway ward. I am a participant in ISAIAH, the interfaith coalition for a just and inclusive city and state. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community. The proposed tenant protections are modest and targeted. They support landlords who are already engaged in best practices with respect to:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- Just cause notice
- Advance notice of sale
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. NOW is the time to pass tenant protections. Thank you for your support.

Pierre Gingerich-Boberg

Dear Mitra,

My name is Eily Marlow and I'm a Hamline Midway resident. I am a constituent of your Ward and leader in ISAIAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance. I know you are a HUGE supporter of renters rights and I have no doubt you will protect them in this crisis but I did want to show you that you have support AND provide ISAIAH's rationale for this ordinance.

We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started. Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination.

We need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- Just cause notice
- Advance notice of sale

- Tenant rights and responsibilities information
As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Rev Eily Marlow

Good evening, Saint Paul City Council:

My name is Anab, I'm a Ward 1 resident and a Somali refugee who resettled in Saint Paul on July 6, 2006. I have 7 children, almost all who attended Saint Paul Public Schools, graduating from Central High School and Como High over the past decade. I'm a long time renter and want to share with you why I support this ordinance.

The African immigrant community I come from are majority renters just like a super majority of people of color in the city. Yes - this makes this ordinance a racial equity issue. Your yes or no vote will show whether you are actually about race equity or just dressing up as a race equity champion. Vote yes for race equity.

Just cause notice is a must. I hear many African immigrants state that their lease was not renewed for any reason. I have others who say they believe the landlord ended the lease because we have big families. Just cause eliminates the grey space and makes things blatantly clear why the lease is ending for both the landlord and the renter. It's tough finding housing for big families and for the lease to end for no apparent reason makes it very challenging to find homes on time. Just cause isn't saying renters can just do whatever they want. It's saying if renters do stupid things we can all agree that it's a violation of the lease and they should go. It's also saying that renters should have the right to stay in their home without being displaced by a landlord without sound reason. Yes - it happens more than you think, just ask Black people and immigrants if their lease hasn't been renewed and they haven't been given a reason why. Go to the East African stores and mosques and barber shops. You will quickly find out. All said, vote yes to just cause. It's a piece of paper saying why!

The tenant information packet is a given, so I won't elaborate on it, except to say I hope it's translated and accessible to different cultural and linguistic communities. Vote yes to tenant information packet.

Last, it's not in the ordinance but I hope the ordinance applies to the public housing authority and the titanic high rise building near Target in the Midway. Lots of African immigrants live in these buildings and the PHA and titanic are the kings of eviction and feel the rules don't apply to them. Please make sure the ordinance apply to them.

Vote yes, Anab.

City Council members,

My name is Laura Vance, I'm a resident of Ward 4 (Como Park). I'm writing to voice my strong support for Ordinance 20-14 establishing renter protections in the city of St. Paul and ask that you vote yes on this ordinance. As a city and state we're experiencing a deep crisis in housing affordability, and currently over half of St. Paul residents are renters (and nearly 70% of those are cost-burdened, paying more than they can afford, for rent). Housing instability and unaffordability for our city's renters are exacerbated by practices currently allowed in the city of Saint Paul, including sky-high security deposits and unnecessarily extensive background screenings. Those practices leave too many people priced out or screened out of a safe place to live in our city.

The fact that we don't already have ordinances/laws in place to protect renters from being charged exorbitant security deposits by landlords, or ensure adequate notice before eviction from or selling of the home they're renting, is abhorrent. This ordinance is a fantastic first step toward addressing the power imbalances in a system that has run unchecked in its profiteering off of renters - a more demographically and socioeconomically diverse group of Saint Paulites than homeowners - for too long. In the midst of a pandemic, when economic insecurity and housing instability is at the forefront of many of our neighbors' minds, this ordinance is more urgently needed than ever.

I ask you to vote yes on this ordinance, which has been informed by extensive community engagement and quite honestly has been (too many) years in the making. I'm asking as a renter, a resident of Saint Paul, and someone who cares deeply about my neighbors being able to afford to call Saint Paul home.

Thank you,

Laura Vance
1410 Breda Ave
Como Park

I absolutely support Tenant protections.

-Jason Jungbluth

I strongly support Ordinance 20-14. Housing is a precious commodity in this city, and we need to do more to protect those who rent.

My first experiences renting were here in Saint Paul when I was a student. I turned to HomeLineMN for help when a landlord would not return my security deposit, but that's only because I knew how to search for those resources.

You shouldn't need to have a graduate degree to negotiate a fair lease.

Jayne Discenza

1819 Marshall Ave

Dear Mr. Tolbert and other councilmembers,

I write in strong support of ordinance 20-14. It gives people who can't afford to buy a home the minimum decent protection a society as rich as ours should give them. Please support it.

Thanks,

Carl Voss
1877 Berkeley Ave

Hello Council -

I am a homeowner in St. Paul and a teacher in St. Paul Public Schools and this email is in full support of the tenant protections put forth in ordinance 20-14.

All the tenant protections offered in this ordinance are common sense, rational protections that can lead to better relationships between tenants and landlords. As a homeowner in St. Paul I welcome any new neighbors that want to live in our beautiful city and the protections offered in this ordinance will continue to help St. Paul grow and develop.

These protections will help renters financially by limiting security deposits, and the tenant screening criteria reform can reduce housing discrimination. I am very lucky to own a home, but I know many of our residents cannot afford that luxury, and the protections in this ordinance will help to secure affordable, safe housing for all our neighbors in St. Paul. This ordinance will greatly help to make St. Paul a more equitable place for everyone.

Thank you,

Zach Floyd

hello,

i would like to write and say, i support tenant protections. i am glad representation for renters on the st paul city council has increased, and i expect that trend to continue. people who cannot afford to buy a home deserve protections against abusive landlords.

Daniel Porter
2154 Juliet Ave
St. Paul MN 55105

Hello Councilmember,

My name is Libby Rihm and I have been a resident of Ward 4 for nine years. I am writing in support of ordinance 20-14 and ask that you please vote yes on the ordinance and in favor of greater protections for my friends and neighbors who rent, and for all renters in the city of St. Paul.

I hope you will stand up for the renters in this city (over half the city) by voting for the S.A.F.E. Housing Tenant Protections ordinance as is without watering down the protections we are granting to renters.

Thank you for your support,
Libby Rihm

Hello,

I am in writing in support of ordinance 20-14. Tenant protections are necessary in normal conditions, and during a pandemic and subsequent economic downturn, even more so. Tenants deserve rights and protections against predatory landlords.

Of course, this bill doesn't address all aspects of the housing crisis, but enumerating renters' rights is a good place to start. Let's put ordinance 20-14 into action, and then start working on even bolder ways to improve access to housing access for all in St Paul, like increased public housing and homeless shelters.

Thanks,
Audrey Hendrickson
Frogtown 55104

We are in a housing crisis! ORD. 20-14 is the least we can do to begin to give people a chance to meet their basic needs. I support Tenant Protections.

Thank you,
Beth Swanberg

Council Member Tolbert,

My name is Mark Dickinson, a homeowner in Ward 3 and supporter of ISALAH. I choose to live in St. Paul and support a diverse urban community. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul. I urge you to vote YES on the ordinance. St. Paul needs comprehensive tenant protections now more than ever to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination.

Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage caused by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- Just cause notice
- Advance notice of sale
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included. Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Mark Dickinson

1674 Princeton Ave.

Councilmember Thao, Members of the City Council,

My name is Ian, and I'm writing to express my strong support for the S.A.F.E. Housing Tenant Protections ordinance currently before the city council.

Renters make up 51% of Saint Paul residents, and they are disproportionately younger, lower-income, and people of color. Because of decades of disinvestment, racially discriminatory housing policy, and exclusionary practices, they are facing a housing crisis that demands comprehensive action. The time for tenant protections is now.

These tenant protections directly address the most common challenges renters are facing like discrimination during the screening process, informal evictions through non-renewal of leases, abrupt notice to vacate, and more. They combine existing best practices in the market with policies that have been shown to have an impact in other cities.

Tenant protections are aimed at giving more people access to the housing they need and preventing families from being displaced from the housing they already have. They are not meant to solve our housing crisis all on their own. They are part of a sweeping set of strategies including rent supplements, landlord incentives like 4d and the new risk mitigation fund, and production of affordable units that are meant to tackle our housing crisis. Higher density housing is one of the key elements of combating our climate crisis, and this means having a large portion of the population renting apartments. These tenants deserve legal protections to make this a feasible housing option!

I hope you will stand up for the renters in this city (over half the city) by voting for the S.A.F.E. Housing Tenant Protections ordinance as is without watering down the protections we are granting to renters.

Ian R Buck
514 Thomas Ave W

Hello,

I am in writing in support of ordinance 20-14. Tenant protections are necessary in normal conditions, and during a pandemic and subsequent economic downturn, even more so. Tenants deserve rights and protections against predatory landlords.

Of course, this bill doesn't address all aspects of the housing crisis, but enumerating renters' rights is a good place to start. Let's put ordinance 20-14 into action, and then start working on even bolder ways to improve access to housing access for all in St Paul, like increased public housing and homeless shelters.

Thanks,
Audrey Hendrickson
Frogtown 55104

Dear Council:

My name is Luke Hanson, and I'm a renter in Ward 3. I'm writing to voice my strong support for the proposed Tenant Protection Ordinances for the city of Saint Paul.

When I heard about the proposed ordinances, I was astounded and embarrassed that our city didn't already have these basic protections in place. None of them are radical, and none of them pose significant burdens on landlords or management companies. I want to address some of the myths that opponents of the core pieces of the ordinance have propagated:

Requiring a "just cause notice" won't make it harder for landlords to evict "problem tenants," as some would claim. The language of the proposed ordinance simply requires that landlords cannot evict tenants without a reason. The ordinance also defines a host of scenarios which would serve as just cause for landlords to evict tenants.

Some landlords claim that the proposed reforms on tenant screening processes would increase the costs of housing because of increased risk to property managers, and that simply giving someone housing does not ensure their stability. These narratives don't deserve our attention: they treat people as liabilities instead of human beings with innate potential. Research shows that most past criminal offenses have no significant impact on a person's ability to be a stable tenant. And on the other side of the coin, it is extremely unlikely that a person trying to build a stable life and livelihood is the stability of their housing situation. Safe and stable housing should be treated as a human right in our city, and these tenant screening reforms would be a small step towards that vision.

The other three proposed elements of the ordinance so ridiculously sensible that it's hard to argue with them. Capping security deposits at one-month's rent have become a fairly standard requirement in other states, as they should be: 59% of American households live paycheck to paycheck, and can't afford to save multiple months or rent for a deposit. Requiring a 90-day advance notice of sale does nothing to prevent landlords' right to sell their property; it merely ensures vulnerable families a few more weeks to scramble-search for a new home in a city with a dangerously low rental vacancy rate. And renters ought to have easy access to an easy-to-understand list of the rights, responsibilities, and supportive resources they have as tenants.

Thanks in advance for voting "yes" to adopt these basic common-sense protections.

Luke Hanson
1880 Grand Avenue

May 8, 2020 Dear Honorable Members of the St. Paul City Council, "***We all do better when we all do better.***" Late Senator Paul Wellstone's adage has never been more relevant. I ask you to support the Tenant Protection Ordinance 20-14. The City of St. Paul showed its commitment to affordable housing when it created the Affordable Housing Trust Fund in 2019. In that same year, the Office of Financial Empowerment developed the framework for a citywide fair housing strategy. I believe in the City's commitment to all four of the framework's focus areas: education and engagement, enforcement and compliance, preservation and production, and tenant protections. As a resident of Ward 4, and in my roll as the At-Large Landlord Representative on the Macalester Groveland Community Council (MGCC), I have participated in education and engagement opportunities on affordable housing. I've shared the materials with other landlords and social service providers. As a landlord, I can testify to the Department of Safety's commitment to both landlord education and to enforcement and compliance of our laws. As a member of MGCC's Housing and Land Use Committee I have experienced the City's effort to balance preservation with the need for production. Passage of Tenant Protection Ordinance 20-14 is the next step in the Council's "goal of eliminating housing disparities." I respectfully ask you to help us all do better by voting "Yes" for

Tenant Protection Ordinance 20-14. Sincerely, *Cathy Plessner* Cathy Plessner 2038
Summit Avenue

Thomas E. Kottke, MD, MSPH
571 Otis Avenue, St. Paul, MN

Dear Councilmembers

Thank you for your service during these very challenging times. During the Covid-19 pandemic it is more important than ever to stabilize housing in St. Paul. This is true not only for those who are housing insecure but also for the rest of the community because people who have no shelter to shelter in can become viral vectors.

Therefore, I am writing to express my strong support for the S.A.F.E. Housing Tenant

Protections ordinance (Ordinance 20-14) currently before the city council.

The majority of Saint Paul residents are renters, and they are disproportionately younger, lower-income, and people of color. Because of decades of disinvestment, racially discriminatory housing policy, and exclusionary practices, they are facing a housing crisis that demands comprehensive action. The time for tenant protections is now.

These tenant protections directly address the most common challenges renters are facing: discrimination during the screening process, informal evictions through non-renewal of leases, abrupt notice to vacate, and more. They combine existing best practices in the market with policies that have been shown to have an impact in other cities.

Tenant protections are aimed at giving more people access to the housing they need and preventing families from being displaced from the housing they already have. They are not meant to solve our housing crisis all on their own. They are part of a sweeping set of strategies including rent supplements, landlord incentives like 4d and the new risk mitigation fund, and production of affordable units that are meant to tackle our housing crisis.

I hope you will stand up for the renters in this city by voting for the S.A.F.E. Housing Tenant Protections ordinance as currently written.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phuong E. Kettner MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dear Councilmembers,

My name is Rachel Willson-Broyles, and I'm a homeowner and constituent of Ward 4. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul, and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits will help ensure nobody is screened or shut out of a place to live they could otherwise afford
- Just cause notice will standardize landlord best practices to ensure a legally defined and acceptable just cause is the reason for terminating a tenancy,

curbing arbitrary and informal evictions and helping people stay in their homes

- Advance notice of sale will slow down the rapid loss of NOAH in our communities that is fueling displacement and give preservation and affordable buyers more time to bring forth deals that could help tenants stay housed and improve our city
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information will dramatically improve landlord-tenant relationships and help make sure every renter in our city knows what their rights and resources are

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now.
Thank you for your support,

Rachel Willson-Broyles

Council member Tolbert and Fellow Council members,

As a former renter and possible future renter I am writing to urge you to support of ordinance 20-14. I have had instances of my rental past that these ordinances would have been helpful. And in an exceptionally tight rental market like we have in our beloved Pigs Eye this is the bare minimum we should do given the slow pace of housing stock increase and even slower pace of affordable housing stock increase.

Please do the right thing and support this ordinance
Lord almighty
Jeff Zaayer
1750 Saunders Ave

CM Jalali, et al,

Over 50% of our citizens are renters and it is time that we offer them protections as a city. I support the proposed St Paul Tenant Protections. This goes hand-in-hand with our region's need to build more housing. We have to protect people from predatory landlords who currently hold all the cards when it comes to supply that is far outstripped by demand.

Let's make sure everyone has access to, and security in, housing.

Thank you,

Mike Sonn
1458 Wellesley Ave, St Paul, MN 55105

Dear City of St. Paul City Council -

Please see the attached document with my "big picture" comments as well as comments and questions on specific sections within Ordinance 20-14. Sorry for it's length, there is a lot of content in the 11 page ordinance to discuss.

In summary:

- At a quick glance, the ordinance "sounds nice" and "the right thing to do". Unfortunately, there are no minor "tweaks" to be made or minor wording changes, the entire Ord 20-14 needs to be halted.
- **Please make a motion to rescind the Creating Chapter 193 of the Legislative Code (Title XIX) pertaining to Tenant Protections as written today**
- **Create a Task Force** with all players at the table (landlords, tenants, community organizations, etc) to dive into the details now that the ordinance wording has been put onto paper and can be discussed, negotiated, compromised on, etc.
- We all know what happened with the **unintended consequences** from the organized trash program and it's impact to multifamily properties since they were not invited to the negotiation table. Let's not repeat history and "forget" to engage key players in the community prior to creating new City ordinance language
- Let's not rush this very contentious new ordinance through and end up spending money the City of St. Paul doesn't have fighting in court like what happened with the Voter Registration information lawsuit the City of St. Paul just recently lost
- Let's work together to make St. Paul landlord and tenant relationships a success
- Let's work together to have as much affordable housing as possible in St. Paul
- Let's work together to provide great safe housing for our St. Paul residents

Thank you. Please reach out to me if you want to discuss anything further. I would be more than happy to serve on a task force to work together on making a successful language for landlords, tenants, and the community of St. Paul.

~ Alisa Lein
Ward 1 & 2 property manager
Ward 3 resident

ORD 20-14 Comments & Concerns

BIG PICTURE:

- Not all St. Paul landlords are bad people and "out to get and take advantage of" tenants
- Government/City owned or managed properties or properties which receive "aid" from the city or government should be the only targets for the proposed ordinance
- Hit the PAUSE BUTTON on this ordinance and engage the key players and the entire St. Paul community in discussions now that the proposed ordinance wording has been written. There are many un-intended consequences. Do NOT create "oops/forgotten" issues as happened with multifamily properties in the St. Paul trash

program by saying “this is a 1st step, we need to start somewhere, we’ll tweak issues as time goes on”.

- o According to the document “Fair Housing Convenings: Tenant Protections Policy Engagement”, 5 to 7 Landlords and 26 Renters were “engaged”. That is NOT anywhere near enough engagement for creating citywide mandates.

- Unintended consequences/adverse impacts:

- o Increased rate of applicant denials

- o Increased monthly rents to cover increased risks and expenses to landlord because of restrictions on applicant

- screening and lease termination

- o Unhappy neighbors in the same building and on the same block due to who the landlord “let in” to the building and cannot “get out” (ie. criminals, loud partiers, disruptive “bad apple tenants” and their guests, etc)

- Landlords must have FLEXIBILITY for who they accept or deny into their properties

- Landlords ability to deny applicants is severely restricted with the proposed ordinance. Responsible landlords are not

- in the business to deny tenants, they are in the business to provide “safe” housing. Providing safe housing treats

- people differently based on individual risk factors while adhering to nondiscrimination policies. Financial lenders

- screen applicants, landlords must be allowed to do the same as any mortgage lender, credit card lender, etc.

- Landlords ability to terminate leases is severely restricted with the proposed ordinance

- o The tenant can force the landlord into court for any disagreement of a reason to terminate the lease.

- Very

- time-consuming and expensive landlords and tenants.

- o Landlords and tenants should be able to terminate leases without a reason.

- If the drive behind these new “rules” is to slow down what big corporations and developers are doing in St. Paul by

- buying up possible affordable housing properties and then not making it affordable housing, that should be addressed

- for that situation. It should NOT apply to the thousands of “mom and pop” and existing St. Paul landlords.

- This ordinance does not help small landlord business in St. Paul to be successful. Instead, it mandates unreasonably

- restrictive requirements. Why not use positive programs and tools to encourage small businesses rather than heavy

- hammers to discourage vitality and success in St. Paul???

- The wrong person in a building almost always costs more than leaving that space empty. Mandating these rules on

- landlords in St. Paul will not positively impact tenants and landlords. At face value, it seems like the feel good thing

- to do for tenants. In reality, these punitive measures will damage both good landlords and good tenants.

- With this ordinance, tenants can:

- Terminate their lease for any reason or for no reason

Disrupt neighbors in the same building or neighboring properties on the same block, damage apartment property, fail to pay rent, and force a landlord to “prove it” in court – and risk losing a maximum of one months rent

Remain “judgment proof” if they have few assets and low income

COMMENTS ON PROPOSED ORDINANCE SECTIONS

1. Sec. 193.03 -- Security deposits

Do NOT restrict landlords from the option of collecting more than 1 months rent for a security deposit. Tenants

will be denied at an increasing rate rather than allowing the landlord the flexibility to collect more up front if the

person is a risk and/or not fully qualified

i. EXAMPLE:

1. Tenant #1 – Single Female, new Mitchell Hamline law student, no rental history because a recent college graduate living in a dorm, no credit history, not allowed to work much due to the law school restriction on employment hours while in school so therefore will not meet the income requirements, no criminal history.

2. Tenant #2 – Single Female, working and earning 3x the monthly rent, current and past good rental history, good credit history, no criminal history.

Today, we would approve both tenants and require a security deposit of equal to 2 months rent for Tenant #1

and a security deposit of equal to 1 month rent for Tenant #2. Tenant #1 is a much higher risk to a landlord

than Tenant #2. Higher risk = higher deposit = a much better chance of a successful landlord/tenant relationship and no eviction

Under the new ORD 20-14 proposed rules, we would DENY tenant #1 and APPROVE tenant #2. Tenant #1 then

must continue to search for an apartment.

Many tenants are happy to pay more than equal to one months rent for the deposit in order to be given a chance

and bring it up as something they are willing to do even before the landlord presents it as an option

Pre-paid rent limitation: Many tenants want to pay rent in a lump sum payment (ie. Sept – Dec). Do NOT restrict

those tenants from being allowed to do so, and do not prohibit landlords from accepting a lump sum rent

payment.

2. Sec. 193.04 -- Applicant screening guidelines for prospective tenants

Criminal history

Very important not only to the landlord to base decisions on any criminal history, but also for the safety of other tenants in the building and neighboring properties.

A history of repeated convictions can identify an individual who simply refuses to follow established rules.

This kind of history can highlight increased likelihood of failure to abide by rental lease terms.

Credit history

Credit history is actually one of the BEST indicators of past and future financial performance by an individual not only on all their bills (credit cards, mortgage, medical, cell phone, auto loan, etc) but also on

rental payments. Do NOT restrict landlords' ability to use all credit history.

Delinquent apartment rent or utility payments almost never show up on national credit bureau records.

Rental history

How long is a "history of successful rent payment" needed in order to prove payment history to a prospective landlord? 1 month? 6 months? 5 years?

Income test should be allowed to be equal to 3 times the monthly rent

Successful payment of how much rent? Example: 2-year history of paying \$800/mo with an income of \$2,500/mo. Must all prospective landlords approve an application if a tenant applies for an apartment where new rent will be \$1,200/mo but income remains at \$2,500/mo?

Many landlords across the United States, when asked for references on a current or past tenant, will only

give out dates rented and monthly rent paid. They will not disclose payment or damage history "due to company policy". Without detailed rental history from past or current landlords, due to restrictive company policies, some tenants cannot provide sufficient history. BUT prospective landlords might be prohibited from denying an applicant because a landlord, not the applicant, withheld information.

3. Sec. 193.05 -- Just cause notice for tenants

REMOVE THIS ENTIRE SECTION. It's ripe for lawsuits. If, instead of simply terminating a lease, a landlord is forced

into court to prove every disputed item in this section, there are two possible outcomes:

1. The number of evictions in housing court will increase exponentially in Ramsey County. This is a huge cost, likely never recouped by the landlord; or,

2. Landlords ignore problem tenants because court is too much trouble. Those problem tenants then disrupt neighbors in the building and/or neighboring properties.

It will cost far more than the one month of a security deposit to cover court filing fees, attorney fees, fees

to serve legal paperwork, unpaid rent, unpaid damages and unpaid cleaning charges.

In effect, this section creates unlimited-length one-sided language that protect disruptive/problem/slowpaying

tenants. Landlords cannot terminate without "just cause" and tenants who dispute a termination can force landlords into court by simply saying, "Prove it."

4. Sec. 193.06 -- Advance notice of sale (of affordable housing)

Why is this sectioned out for only affordable housing?

What if a multifamily property has some units in it by definition "affordable" and others above the "affordable"

definition amount?

5. Sec. 193.08 -- Notice of sale (of affordable housing)

Why is this sectioned out for only affordable housing?

What if a multifamily property has some units in it by definition “affordable” and others above the “affordable” definition amount?

Some Outstanding Questions:

- Impact to rental independent living properties? Assisted living?
- Impact to short term rentals (ie. airbnb, vrbo, boutique hotel, etc)
- Sub-leases? Who is the “landlord” if a tenant sub-leases without the owner’s ok?
- Liability issues: Will the City of St. Paul cover costs if a landlord is “forced” to rent to a person who causes damage or injury that results in a lawsuit?

Dear Saint Paul City Council:

My name is Fartun. I am a long time Saint Paul renter and resident. I support the tenant protection ordinance that will be heard at the city council in a few weeks. I want you to hear my unwavering support for S.A.F.E. Housing Saint Paul.

The time is more important than ever with the realities of COVID today and in the next year. We will hit a recession and in fact it’s probably already started. If we learned anything from the Great Recession, it’s that renters, people of color, and the economically starved needed protection but didn’t get it because all levels of government failed them - including the city. Your yes vote can change that reality.

Give renters the protections that should have been here during redlining, the destruction of Rondo, the war on drugs (called weed and seed in Saint Paul), predatory lending (that disproportionately displaced renters of color when the landlords couldn’t make their payments), the Great Recession, and now COVID-19. Frogtown, the Eastside, the Westside, North End, Sibley Manor, and all historically redlined areas of the city cannot afford you not to vote yes. This ordinance is scheduled to go in to effect in January 2021 - which is forecasted to be at the heart of another recession. Our city needs bold and big decisions now more than ever.

I urge you to not let history repeat itself. Be honest with yourself with whose interest you are holding with this vote. Vote yes and support this ordinance for renters in Saint Paul.

Thanks,
Fartun
Fartun Abdi

Hello

I wanted to write to express my support for Ordinance 20-14 the tenant protections ordinance. I am a homeowner in district 10, but I have had experiences as a renter in the past that this ordinance would help address.

Thanks

Craig Foster
886 Lakeview Ave

Dear Council Member Thao,

My name is Sarah Mullins and I'm a renter. I am a constituent of your Ward and leader in ISALAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- Just cause notice
- Advance notice of sale
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Sarah Mullins
1008 Ashland Ave #2

CM Thao:

I'm a constituent of your Ward, writing to ask you to support the tenant protection ordinance. I believe we need to do more to ensure renters have equal voice in today's housing market, where a shortage of housing is leading to abuses of the system.

Thank you for your support.

Bill Lindeke

urban geographer
tcsidewalks.blogspot.com
956 Charles Avenue
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
413.9 CO2 ppm he/him/his

Dear Council Member **Dai Thao**

My name is Betty Ann Penda Kane. My family been in Saint Paul since the 1920s. I have lived in Saint Paul since 1976.

I was first a renter and now I am a homeowner. I am a constituent of your Ward and leader in ISAIAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- Just cause notice
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- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Betty Ann Penda Kane

Hi Councilman Thao,

My name is Betsy Ohrn and I'm a homeowner. I am a constituent of your Ward and leader in ISAIAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits

- Just cause notice
- Advance notice of sale
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Betsy Ohrn

Councilman Thai, as a member of the local Isaiah group and a parishioner of St. Clement's Episcopal Church in ward 1, i want to ask you to vote for the Tenant Rights and Protections ordinance for St. Paul. In times like these with many easily displaced from homes, supporting this ordinance is critical.

Now is the time to push this through!

Thanks

Bob Goepel

Dear Council Member Thao,

My name is Rev. Russell Rathbun and I'm a homeowner in your Ward and leader in ISAIAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Thank you for all that you do, especially in these troubled times. I'm grateful for the strong positions you take to support those with the greatest needs. Please feel free to call on my if you need constituent support for anything.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Russell

Russell Rathbun

russell@houseofmercy.org

Dear Council Member Jalali-Nelson,

My name is Fran Roby and I'm a homeowner, a constituent of your Ward, and leader in ISAIAH. (We have met before!) I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance. (My guess is that you ALREADY STRONGLY support this ordinance!)

Thank you for your outstanding work on behalf of Ward 4!

Fran

Good Evening,

Where can I find more specifics on the S.A.F.E. housing proposal and what the hearing process is? I am a St. Paul Resident (Ward 1) and a relatively new, small, local St. Paul landlord. The S.A.F.E. proposal is incredibly concerning. Putting restrictions on the screening of tenants not only increases financial risk with no financial incentive to buy, maintain, or improve property in St. Paul and also makes our communities less safe. One bad tenant can put a landlord into bankruptcy. I was a renter for many years, and now as a small landlord I see the significant risk and work involved. Putting restrictions on how we can ensure good, viable tenants increases risks for our communities in many ways.

Requiring advance notice of sale is extremely cumbersome--this proposal will make selling a multifamily home in Saint Paul much more difficult, lowering property values on these homes. That said, I'm completely on board with providing tenants information about their rights and believe in strong consumer education and protections against scams/fraud.

A single month security deposit is typical, however, if you are requiring landlords to accept Section 8 tenants (or otherwise restrict criminal and financial/credit screening) it is reasonable to require additional security. A tenant's rental history and credit are admittedly imperfect but nonetheless highly useful metrics on a tenant's prior treatment of property and ability to pay. Certainly, the City would not hire a general contractor to build its roads if the contractor could not demonstrate a good track record via performance bonds and job history? Why should Saint Paul accept subpar tenants that have a history of damaging property, delinquent rent payments, or criminal backgrounds? I don't think these are the types of residents you want to attract.

Increasing rent prices can be attributed in part to the costs associated with the City's organized trash plan (extra \$40/month at my property) and 10% annual levy increases. Instead of vilifying small, local, landlords, I encourage you to look toward slimming the City's annual budget as the PRIMARY strategy to keep St. Paul's housing market safe and affordable. I also encourage you and your staff to research outcomes of other cities across the country that have tried similar measures (spoiler alert: they have poor outcomes). This proposal will cause rent prices to balloon and create a safe haven for bad tenants throughout the City.

Thanks for your consideration. Stay healthy!

Mike Behan
601 Topping Street (Ward 1 Resident)

Dear Council Members:

This letter is to assist and thank each of you for your service to the City of St. Paul. Your desire to improve the quality of life in St. Paul is shared and appreciated. Toward that goal I am submitting the following comments regarding the proposed ordinance Chapter 193, pertaining to Tenant Protections.

Some key points of consideration that are vital to ensuring that such an ordinance actually benefits all or at least the vast majority of both present and future St. Paul residents:

1. The attempt to increase the rights of some renters must ensure the rights of others are not consequently jeopardized. "First do no harm"
 1. Everyone has a right to a safe place to live where being at home is a positive and enjoyable experience.
 2. One problem person can ruin the neighborhood for everyone living there.
 3. As written, this proposal will most likely lead to many good people leaving St. Paul for cities where a safe and enjoyable living experience is better protected.
2. The State of Minnesota's 504B provides significant tenant protection with some incentive for everyone to consider the law and others when choosing their actions. This proposal lessens the incentive toward being a good neighbor.
3. As it stands the current laws and court interpretation of those laws seriously limit options for a good landlord to protect good tenants by preventing or addressing problem tenants. On paper, this proposal provides landlord options. In fact, those options are not realistic and tie a landlords hands when it comes to removing a tenant that is making life miserable for everyone else living in that building and neighborhood.
4. I BEG OF YOU: PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THE OPTION FOR A LANDLORD TO CHOOSE TO NOT RENEW A LEASE WITHOUT PROVIDING PROOF OF CAUSE!!! Please see example one below.
 1. The right to not renew a lease is in all REALITY the only doable option for getting rid of problem tenants who, while paying their rent in full on the first of every month, also make living there a horrid experience for everyone else living around them. This proposal will result in good tenants moving since the landlord is unable to do anything about the problem.
 2. Problem groups such as drug dealers often qualify for low income housing because their income is undocumented but they can always pay their rent. Please do not further empower them!
 3. Documentation of violations other than non-payment of rent is virtually impossible in the real world. Per the proposal that documentation will be necessary in order to choose to not renew a lease. It is no secret that somethings while undoubtedly obvious cannot be proven in a court of law.
 4. Victims are justifiably afraid of retaliation should they opt to speak up for themselves.
 1. It is hard enough for these victims to confidentially report crimes to the landlord.
 2. It is unfair to expect them to take time off of work to go to court to testify.
 3. They will move rather than dealing with the burden this ordinance will place upon them
 5. Fear is also an issue for neighbors or other witnesses when it comes to actually documenting their victimization.
 6. It is important to acknowledge the fact that a lease is an agreement between two parties with a limited time frame. The proposal as written actually makes it on open ended agreement from the tenant's perspective while eliminating the property owners' choices.

7. Please keep in mind that low income tenants often qualify for Legal Aid which is without question very aggressive to landlords. No matter what the circumstance, Legal Aid attorneys will choose court forcing the landlord to hire a lawyer. This leads to major cost for the landlord despite the fact that the landlord behaved in a totally legal and just manner. (One once cost me \$8,000. I won the case but the tenant got to live in my property rent free with no repercussions. How would you feel in that position)
8. Neither the City or the County currently have the resources needed to support a “for cause eviction”. This will simply further tax already limited resources.
9. A lease agreement is a time limited legal contract between 2 parties. It is no more fair or legal to require one party to renew against their will than is it to make the same requirement of the other party.
5. The City of St. Paul Police department is admittedly understaffed. The Department simply does not have the capacity to respond to let alone write a report for some major issues let alone to document lease violations.
 1. While I encourage tenants to call the police to report crimes that has proved discouraging to the tenants. When they take the time and risk to call and no one shows up or does anything about it, why bother.
 2. Police cannot get to any situation instantly. Priority is logically placed but also increases response time for many calls to service to the point that it is no longer possible for them to document most calls.
 3. This proposal leaves landlords between a rock and a hard place.
 4. PLEASE DO NOT IMPLEMENT THESE REQUIEMENTS WITHOUT ASSURING THE POLICE DEPARTMENT HAS THE RESOURCES TO PROVIDE THE DOCUMENTATION THE COURTS WILL BE REQUIRING.
6. St. Paul has a FORCE unit dedicated to assisting with problem properties and drug related issues.
 1. That unit is equally short staffed.
 2. The Force cannot do anything without at least 3 written police reports.
 3. The police are already challenged to provide the reports needed to support this service. How can they be expected to provide documentation for many of the lessor issues that are lease violations and greatly impact the quality of life for responsible residents.
7. Ramsey County has limited resources both for processing court cases and for Sheriff serving paperwork. Again, availability of these resources should be confirmed before they are required.
8. Allowing additional occupants, not on the lease to live in, or spend a significant amount of time in home endangers everyone else living in the area. No one should be allowed to live in a unit who is has not gone through the same screening that is required of everyone else.

The names of everyone living in the home needs to be documented for several obvious reasons.

This has gotten long and I am running out of time for submission, therefore am choosing to end my

comments here. I have focused more on the option to not renew as I feel that is the most significant item as taking this away will not just hurt landlords, it will push good people out of the city. Other items, in my opinion, should be looked at more closely from the perspectives of not only the landlords but of the good and law abiding residents of St. Paul.

I ask that you please remember that "Landlords are people too." The majority of us are good and hardworking people who simply want to provide for ourselves and our families by providing safe and affordable housing to good people. We too should have some rights, especially considering property that we own and the management of that property. It is no lie to say that my blood, sweat and tears have been incorporated in my properties over the years. I am not rich. I just want a secure retirement.

ONE EXAMPLE: While I could share more examples, I will share this one to make my point regarding the necessity of the landlords right to choose to not renew a lease.

I rented to a family with fair references and allowed their Pit Bull as it was said to be a therapy dog for their son. Within the course of only a few months: THEY PAID THEIR RENT IN FULL AND ON TIME EACH AND EVERY MONTH! However:

- They not only failed to train the dog as promised but got a second Pit Bull that was untrained. These dogs barked most of the time were terrorizing the neighborhood. I received comments from neighbors and other tenants regarding the dogs getting out of the fence and chasing other dogs and excessive barking that was negatively impacting the quality of life for everyone within earshot.
- The older son (a teenager) caused even more trouble.
 - He made sexual threats to a teenage female living in the unit below.
 - He physically threatened the younger male living in the unit below.
 - The children would no longer leave their home in fear.
 - He also broke into storage units.
 - Vandalized and stole his neighbor's property.
 - Tried to break into the coin boxes of the laundry machines
- Someone from that unit actually threw dirty diapers in the kiddie swimming pool of the children below on more than one occasion as well as throwing them in the yard and parking area.
- They refused to take out their trash and the unit became infested with cockroaches (there was NEVER a problem before).

Numerous other complaints not only for other tenants but from neighbors as well.

The complaints were constant. Police were called but, for several reasons, were not able to do anything about it. My good tenants were threatening to move. I contacted a lawyer who informed me that the only practical approach was to wait until the lease expired and choose to not renew. This was not only the only cost-effective approach but the fastest (6 months out) because creating the documentation to satisfy the court and going through that process would take much longer.

Please note: I encourage (as I always do) my tenants to call the police and report all neighborhood problems even though "excessive" leads to repercussions for the landlord per St. Paul Law.

Additionally: These people were paying their rent each and every month. Any damage or infestation had already been caused and I was already obligated to those costs. Choosing to not renew that lease was a costly choice for me. The only motivation for my doing so was the fact that I pride myself on being a good landlord and providing a safe and enjoyable living environment where people look forward to coming home. This is becoming more and more difficult as the laws, taxes and fees continually increase and, in many cases, tie me hands. It is difficult to make the responsible choice. Please do not make it any harder.

Thank you for your consideration and have a great day!

Ronda Isakson

Hi,

I currently a homeowner and landlord of the duplex I live in, and I support the SAFE Housing Ordinance. I have been a renter in the past, and renters comprise more than half of all St Paul residents.

Renters deserve protection and this ordinance is an important first step towards making the environment more fair and equitable for everyone. When renters win, all of STP wins.

I hope to see the successful passage of SAFE soon.

Cheers,
Michael Shannon

Just wanted to say that, as a resident of W7, and the owner of rental units in W7 and W6, I strongly support the tenant protection ordinance that the Council will be considering.

The provisions in this ordinance are common sense steps we can take to make things a little bit better for the 50% or so of St. Paul residents who rent. No good landlord will be affected by these steps in any negative way. For me, I can say confidently that they won't cost me a single dollar, nor will they cause me any problems. For the most part, they are things I am already doing right now.

On the provisions regarding credit score, I have routinely ignored poor credit scores and credit problems unrelated to housing because I understand that the only thing I have a reason or right to care about is the simple question, does this person pay their rent? If yes, why should I care if they pay their student loans?

On the provisions regarding criminal history, I would be relieved to not know about long-ago problems a potential tenant has had with the law. As someone pointed out, I don't have any idea of the criminal history of any of my neighbors who are homeowners— why should a tenant's history be an issue? Criminal behavior can, and should, be banned in any decent lease. So if someone behaves in an unacceptable way, they're violating their lease. But if they made mistakes a year, 5 years, 10 years ago?

Why is that anyone's business? Not to mention, don't people who have paid their debt to society deserve a place to live?

I urge the Council to pass these common sense provisions and move on to even more important protections for tenants. There are plenty of bad landlords out there, and the landlords who try to do things right have nothing to fear from more protections for renters.

Thank you,
Eric Foster
Dayton's Bluff

Dear Mitra—

We are writing to AFFIRM your support for Ordinance 20–14, "Tenant Protections." We know you are a co-sponsor — indeed, you pledged as a candidate to bring a strong voice to the council on behalf of tenants. And, we read your fine piece on Medium.com about the need for these protections.

In 2002, in our early forties and after renting in multiple cities and states for all of our adult lives, we bought our first home here in the Hamline-Midway neighborhood. Although no longer tenants ourselves, we both know the power disparity between tenant and landlord — a disparity that often renders any sense of justice a moot point.

Reading over the public comments only confirms the need for this ordinance. White privilege (and we write as people raced-as-white) creeps into every nook and cranny of this country, including the histories of renters and the assumptions of landlords. Changing attitudes is the work of several lifetimes, but we have started this work in ours. Changing laws, however, is the work of policies and votes. And these changes can begin to offer protections even as we do the long work that reaches into hearts and minds.

We are with you in this work!

David Weiss & Margaret Schuster
1359 Blair Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104

Hello,

I am writing to express my support for the Tenant Protections Ordinance that's coming up for a vote. As a sole-supporting individual who works a full-time job but struggles to make ends meet (my rent for a 1 bedroom apartment has increased by \$104 during the past two years, from \$895 to \$999/month), I would appreciate fair and equitable policies to protect renter's rights -- and provide clear information about what those rights entail.

Thank you,

Julie Comine
1091 Goodrich Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105

Dear Council Member Thao,

My name is Galen Benshoof, and I'm a homeowner and constituent of your Ward. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul, and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

-
-
- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits will help ensure nobody is screened or shut out of a place to live they could otherwise afford
-
-
-
- Just cause notice will standardize landlord best practices to ensure a legally defined and acceptable just cause is the reason for terminating a tenancy, curbing arbitrary and informal evictions and helping people stay in their homes
-
-
-
- Advance notice of sale will slow down the rapid loss of NOAH in our communities that is fueling displacement and give preservation and affordable buyers more time to bring forth deals that could help tenants stay housed and improve our city
-
-
-
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information will dramatically improve landlord-tenant relationships and help make sure every renter in our city knows what their rights and resources are
-

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now.

Thank you for your support,

Galen

Dear Council Member,

My name is Charissa Jones and I'm a renter. I am a constituent of your Ward and leader in ISAIAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- Just cause notice
- Advance notice of sale
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now.

Thank you for your support,

Charissa Jones

Dear City Councilmembers,

I OPPOSE ORD 20-14, "TENANT PROTECTIONS," in part because it will PROTECT (suspected) CRIMINALS.

BACKGROUND – (This is a very real and current issue at a building I own.) During March, April and May, 2020, renters in my building have complained about tenants in the 4-plex building next door (owned by a different landlord who seems not to screen his tenants). Sometimes as often as three to five days per week – at random daytimes, evenings and late nights – non-stop streams of "5-minute

visitors” come and go. Their cars repeatedly block the street, block the alley, and block our renters’ off-street parking spaces. If our renters dare to ask someone to, “Please move your car so I can park my car,” the responses are rude and intimidating. Our renters have been awakened by loud voices and unwanted doorbell ringing in the middle of the night. The police have been called. And the disturbances go on, and on, and on, week after week. Neighbors in nearby houses agree that the situation is aggravating, but most decline to get actively involved – for fear of retaliation. One of our renters gave notice to move because of the non-stop hassles.

There is little doubt that tenants in the 4-plex are actively dealing drugs and that it is not safe for neighbors to confront the non-stop customers. Off the record, police agree. On the record, however, police responses include: “Ongoing investigation” (cannot comment); “Gone on arrival” (having arrived 45-minutes after being called); “DOBS” (disorderly boys); etc.

SOLUTION TODAY – The 4-plex landlord can simply terminate his problem tenant’s lease with (for example) a 1-month notice; No reason required; No expensive and time-consuming courtroom drama.

SOLUTION NEXT YEAR – After “Tenant Protections” with “Just Cause” notice restrictions go into effect, the 4-plex landlord must PROVE in COURT that his tenants violated terms of their lease.

- **WHAT PROOF:**

- **(A)** Police report? Convictions? -- Sorry, ongoing investigations are not sufficient courtroom proof. If the police and prosecutors can't prove it, neither can a landlord.
- **(B)** Witnesses? Convince reluctant and intimidated neighbors to show up in court, ask them to describe problems and identify perpetrators. The witnesses watched visitors not tenants, they cannot be absolutely sure who was being visited, and they did not see transactions that might have occurred inside the 4-plex building. -- Sorry, speculation and hearsay are not sufficient courtroom proof.
- **(C)** Letters from people not present in court? -- Sorry, that’s not admissible evidence.

BOTTOM LINE: The disruptive and potentially dangerous tenants who live next door to my building will be a protected class until police build an airtight case and the (alleged) drug dealers are tried and convicted. Meanwhile, my renters and the other neighbors feel like they live in a combat zone. “Just cause Tenant Protections” will make that their long-term problem -- but, of course, they’re all free to move for any reason, or for no reason.

Eric Lein
361 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55102
Owner of apartment buildings in Ward 1 and Ward 2

Dear Council Member Brendemoen,

My name is Hans Jorgensen, and I'm a pastor at St. Timothy Lutheran in Ward 5. I support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance. I believe St. Paul needs comprehensive tenant protections to help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could be more vulnerable in the wake of economic damage wrought by COVID-19. I believe we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits; Just cause notice; Advance notice of sale; and Tenant rights and responsibilities information.

This ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included. Our house crisis cannot wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Peace,
Hans Jorgensen

Dear Amy,

I am a Ward 5 constituent and leader in ISAIAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for Saint Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever in the midst of this pandemic, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help people stay in their housing and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever as the result of COVID-19.

As I know you are well aware, we already had a housing crisis before COVID-19; now, we need these protections to make sure everyone in our community is stable and safely housed going forward. This means:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- Just-cause notice
- Advance notice of sale
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you also know, the process to develop this ordinance spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Rick King
Rev. Rick King
1153 California Ave. West
Saint Paul, MN 55108

From: chris colantti <ccolantti@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 17, 2020 1:41 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Tenant Protection Ordinance

vote YES!

Dear CM Brendmoen,

Thank you for your support of the Tenant Protections Ordinance at the hearing yesterday (3/11/20) at the St. Paul City Council.
Your continued support of this bold and important work is appreciated.

Sincerely,
Myrna Nelson (Ward 2)
334 Cherokee Ave #412
St. Paul, MN 55107

Phone message:

I am a resident of St. Paul, have been all my life. I'm now a renter rather than a homeowner. I'm calling in regard to the SAFE housing ordinance. My name is Donn Eiden, I live on Randolph Avenue in St. Paul in an apartment. I'm calling in regard to the SAFE housing ordinance proposal. I have to be honest, and I know I'm not alone, I am so disgusted with this City Council. All they can think of is new ways to spend money - money that people don't have, and driving up taxes to the proportions that it's causing many of us just to consider leaving St. Paul. I'm a senior citizen, 83 years old, and this Ayd Mill project is disgusting, this proposal SAFE is disgusting. All you people can do - and I don't mean you individually, I'm talking as a group - all you can think of is spending money and driving up taxes. I'm ready to leave St. Paul. I never thought I would do that, but it's getting worse and worse, and I'll just go to the suburbs, which is not a problem for me. You know, it's so terrible because you can go to meetings and voice your opinions and it can be a majority proposing the same comments, and you people, the council doesn't even listen to it, they do what they want to do. So, a totally disgusted resident of St. Paul. There's nothing more to say. It's terrible. We need a new City Council and we definitely need a new mayor. This mayor is the worst we've had ever, I think. Have a good day. Goodbye.

Dear Council Member Noecker,

As long time (33 years) resident of the West Side I have observed the consistent churn of renters as they are evicted to facilitate new property owners seeking wealth from rental income.

Across the street from me on Winslow and King a Lakota family with school age kids were given a month's notice to vacate one of the rarer multi-bedroom buildings at 598 Winslow. They had rented there for several years and had been good neighbors. No reason for their eviction was given other than

the new owners priorities for property improvement. This is concrete example of the inherent inequality and racial oppression common in landlord tenant relations.

With a depression looming it is high time to protect tenants from the arbitrary market forces that will be increasing housing instability in Saint Paul.

You have been a strong supporter of housing equity and the Tenants Rights Ordinance will add to the tools the City offers to renters. Please encourage your colleagues to support you and this ordinance.

Sincerely,
Robert Craft
100 King Street West

Vote Yes!

-Chris Colantti

Hello Council Member Noecker

I hope all is well with you and yours during this Covid-19 period.

I want to let you know that I support all five of the tenant protections measures being proposed to the Saint Paul City Council and I am asking that you support them to when they come to a vote at the City Council

For too long, many of our renters here on the West Side and in Saint Paul in general have been at the mercy of unscrupulous landlords and property managers. I am sure you have heard the stories already so no need to repeat them here. My work with the West Side Community Organization has found that many renters need protections that the Tenant Protections will bring. Hopefully these measures are just a starting point for further improvements for the conditions of renters here in Saint Paul.

I am a landlord but my rental property is in Los Angeles CA. I was shocked at the lack of protections for renters here in Saint Paul considering I was previously living in a city with a long history of even more stringent rental protections than are being proposed here in Saint Paul.

The first apartment i rented in Los Angeles in 1983 was under rent control and there were many other protections I was entitled to as a renter. The protections being proposed for Saint Paul are standards we already practice with our property in Los Angeles, either because they are mandated or because they just make common sense for the folks we rent to.

Again, I ask that you support the protection provisions.

Sincerely

Martin Hernandez
239 Robie St. E
Saint Paul MN 55107

Dear Council Member Noecker,

My name is Michael, and I'm a resident in the west 7th neighborhood. I am a huge supporter of the proposed tenant protections, and ask that you vote yes on the ordinance.

I support these proposed protections because I'm a renter and most of my family in the twin cities are renters. My family is currently being hit my covid-19 and the landlords don't seem to care that my family can't afford food right now due to losing their jobs but still wants rent.

This would directly impact and help the people I love and care about. I hope you are able to vote yes and stand with St.Paul renters.

Thank you.

Michael McDowell
Community Organizer | West Side Community Organization
209 Page Street | St. Paul, MN 55107
612-910-7449 | MichaelM@wsco.org

Dear Council Member Noecker,

I'm writing to you today to express my deep support for the proposed tenant protections and to ask that you vote YES on the ordinance.

Before my husband and I bought our first ever home nearly 3 years ago (on the West Side!), we had been renters for 15 years. We rented 8 different homes from 8 different landlords, within 5 towns/cities. The terms were never the same, and more often than not, a landlord acted in a way contrary to our lease. We weren't readily aware of our rights at first, and even when we learned about some of them, we didn't know how to hold our landlords accountable in a realistic way that wouldn't lead to us putting our family at risk of either being kicked out or not having our lease renewed. Without legislation to protect us as tenants, we had no assurance that we would be taken seriously or that what we needed changed would actually be enforced.

There are many tenants on the West Side and across St. Paul who need protection right now. Everyone deserves a good home, but so many are being blocked from staying in theirs or having one to begin with.

We must change this, and we can change this. Please vote yes on the tenant protections ordinance.

Thank you,

Monica Marrocco

Councilmember Noecker,

I manage rental property in your Ward and am against creating chapter 193 of the Legislative Code (Title XIX) pertaining to Tenant Protections.

I am highly disheartened by the work the City of Saint Paul staff did in developing the proposed Tenant Protections ordinance. Not only did they ignore all the input from property managers received this last summer and fall, but they developed an ordinance which will ultimately increase property taxes for homeowners of Saint Paul and reduce affordable housing in Saint Paul.

Having the City of Saint set the screening criteria for management companies will cause rents to go up. There are people who damage apartments and do not pay rent, that is why property management companies have screening criteria. If the City of Saint Paul makes it so property management companies can no longer effectively screen people who will not pay rent, then rents will be increased to not only deter people who cannot pay the rent, but also to cover the extra costs associated with the effects of the City's requirements. Changing screening criteria will reduce affordable housing in Saint Paul, and cause rental property values to go down and property taxes for homeowners to increase.

Having the City of Saint Paul limit what criminal offenses are denied will cause more criminals to move to the Saint Paul and non-criminals to leave the Saint Paul. There are many misdemeanor-level offenses relating to sexual attacks and stalking that the proposed ordinance would require be ignored. This will not only cause rental property values to go down and property taxes for homeowners to increase but will also make it more difficult for low income renters to find apartments. In Seattle about 40 percent of landlords reported that they have already adopted stricter rental requirements.

Limiting security deposits and pre-paid rent will cause an increase to monthly rents. The extra security deposits and prepaid fees help offset potential future non-payments from residents that are at higher risk of not paying rent. If these fees are limited, then property managers will have to increase the rent and collect the fees every month to help offset future non-payments. In Seattle over 20% of landlords that increased rent said that one of the reasons was their City's similar rental ordinances. This will reduce affordable housing in Saint Paul.

Is this correct to say that if I want to renovate a unit, I have to give a resident 3 months notice, and I also have to pay the resident a relocation amount equal to three times the Met Council Affordability limit (for a 1br this is 3 times \$1,124 which comes to \$3,372)? This will promote the deterioration of apartments in Saint Paul. This will cause rental property values to go down and property taxes for homeowners to increase.

I do not believe a resident should be allowed to pay rent late 5 months in a year and a management company is not allowed to give them notice. If someone consistently pays rent late that typically means they are in an apartment that is too expensive. This will cause late fees to increase because property

owners still must pay their bills. The increase late fees will then lead to more evictions. This will cause rental property values to go down and property taxes for homeowners to increase.

Just cause notice will cause many respectful renters to move out of Saint Paul, because residents who cause conflict and trouble at a property will be more difficult to give notice to move. However, it will be easy for the non-conflict residents to give notice and move to properties where there are less issues. This will cause rental property values to go down and property taxes for homeowners to increase.

The extra work for owners of affordable housing to report a sale and purchase, will be a burden that may cause less properties to stay, or become affordable housing. This will decrease the amount of affordable housing in Saint Paul.

Overall the proposed ordinance will burden small local owners and cause them to sell to large national companies. This then reduces our Saint Paul's economy, because small owners spend more in their communities than large companies. My family has managed apartments in Saint Paul for over 70 years. I personally can see this ordinance as being a reason for my family and many others to retire from this business. In Seattle about 40% of landlords have sold, or plan to sell, property in response to their City's similar ordinances governing the housing market.

Here are my recommendations:

If there is not enough affordable housing in Saint Paul, then focus your efforts on allocating funds to build more.

If residents of this City are having trouble renting because of poor credit scores and criminal history, then provide community outreach on personal finance and respectful citizenship.

If renters have many late payments, the City should work with renters to find apartments that they can afford and resources to help them budget their money.

What frustrates me about this ordinance is that the City staff and Council members that put this together and submitted it to the Council most likely did zero research on the impacts these types of ordinances have had in other Cities. I am willing to bet that no one read the University of Washington's Seattle Housing Rental Study, published in 2018.

What frustrates me more is that this ordinance was brought to the Saint Paul City Council with zero public input. The City held several public meetings this last summer to discuss safe housing, but none of the language in this proposal was discussed at those meeting. If you look at the public comments to date regarding this proposed ordinance, it is more than apparent that the people involved with developing this ordinance did not seek any input from the residents of Saint Paul affected by it. I had hoped that since we are a democratic government and have groups like Saint Paul STRONG, our City Council will become more transparent. My hope has been ruined. I fully expect you, the Saint Paul City Council, to completely ignore all the comments against this ordinance and pass it.

Chad Skally
Saint Paul Resident and Rental Property Manager

Dear Council Member Noecker,

My name is Hillary Byrn Frazey, and I'm a new homeowner and constituent of your Ward. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul, and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

These tenant protections directly address the most common challenges renters are facing like discrimination during the screening process, informal evictions through non-renewal of leases, abrupt notice to vacate, and more. They combine existing best practices in the market with policies that have been shown to have an impact in other cities. While they will not solve the housing crisis in Saint Paul, they are an important step in the right direction.

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included. I hope you will help bring the hard work that's been done on this ordinance to a successful conclusion.

Although I chose to buy a home in Ward 2, many of my friends, family members, and neighbors are renters (as are the majority of people living in Saint Paul). Let's step up to help people keep their housing by passing these protections.

Thank you for your support,
Hillary Byrn Frazey
475 Banfil Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102
hillary.frazey@gmail.com

Dear Council Member,

My name is Hangatu Omar, and I am a renter and constituent of your ward in St Paul. I strongly support the tenant protection ordinance for St Paul, and I ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Thank you for your work and your support,
Hangatu Omar

Dear Council Member Rebecca Noecker,,
My name is Nicole Larson and I'm a homeowner and I am a constituent of your Ward and leader in ISALAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
Just cause notice
Advance notice of sale
Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Nicole Larson

-Blessings
Nicole

Dear Councilwoman Noecker,

My name is Ian and I'm a resident of Ward 2 and a supporter of ISAIAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- Just cause notice
- Advance notice of sale
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Ian

P.S. I was disappointed to see you voted against the bike path for Ayd Mill Road. In my view, we are at least a decade behind where we need to be with regards to transitioning away from

gasoline as a power source. Making it easier to bike is part of that, and this plan ought to have been implemented a long time ago. \$2 million is peanuts compared what St. Paul will face with a messed-up climate. Just add up the costs of dealing with increased Mississippi flooding every year and you'll see the savings.

Hello Councilmember Noecker,

I'm writing today to ask you to vote YES on the Tenant Protections ordinance.

My partner and I recently moved to Ward 2. Our previous landlord gave us notice to vacate the property within 30 days, on a whim. We loved where we lived and were planning on staying there for years. It was our home. But because there were no tenant protections around Just Cause notice, there was nothing we could do but scramble to find a new home and move. In addition, a week after he gave us notice, the pandemic was in full force in Minnesota, meaning that we had to risk our lives and others' lives by moving.

This is only one story. And we were lucky to have the means to afford a move and a community that supported us. Many renters don't have the ability to move on short notice. Many renters wouldn't have been able to move during a pandemic without extreme economic and personal hardship.

Your ward is filled with renters who love living where they live. They are people who deserve more protections so they're not thrown out of their homes on someone's whim. People who deserve more protections so that when they do choose or need to move, they aren't spending all of their savings to cover ridiculous deposits and fees. People who deserve to feel secure in their homes and who don't have to worry every day and night if they'll still be able to be there in a month.

Housing is a human right. It's time for Saint Paul to provide some protections for its tenants. This ordinance is a great place to start and to build on. Please support it by voting yes.

Sincerely,

Lauren Nielsen
1217 Grand Ave

Dear CM Noecker,

My name is Rev. Matthias Peterson-Brandt. I am a West Side resident and pastor of Cherokee Park United Church here. I am also a leader with ISAIAH.

I am writing to you because I strongly support the S.A.F.E. Tenant ordinance that is being proposed for St. Paul City Council's consideration. I ask you to vote YES on these essential protections.

These protections will help eliminate discrimination, protect families from homelessness, and hold landlords accountable to city-wide standards. Especially with COVID-19 wrecking economic havok, many renters are especially at risk of losing their housing due to loss of income, delays in their stimulus checks, and lack of protections.

The process for developing the S.A.F.E. proposal was carried out with tremendous thoroughness over a multi-year timeline. It represents our values as a city that cares for one another and believes all people should have the ability to thrive and count on certain safeguards as renters. This cannot wait. The time is now.

I thank you for your service and support. I pray that you and your family are well amid this pandemic.

Pastor Matthias

--

Rev. Matthias Peterson-Brandt
Cherokee Park United Church
(he/him/his)

Good morning, Rebecca,

I am Anne Attea, a homeowner in the West End neighborhood. I have lived in Ward 2 for five years and have worked with the Latino community and Isaiah for more than 20 years in both Minneapolis and St Paul as a pastoral minister with the Catholic church.

Many of the people with whom I work and serve are renters in the Twin Cities and have suffered terrible injustices at the hands of unscrupulous landlords. Many live paycheck to paycheck and are even more vulnerable now with the COVID-19 crisis. Affordable housing has always been in short supply and so very needed! St Paul's new tenant protections' ordinance that promotes tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits, just cause notice, the advance notice of sale, and tenant rights and responsibilities information is long overdue, and I ask that you vote in favor of the ordinance.

On behalf of friends and hardworking Latino families that rent in St Paul, I thank you for your support.

Anne Attea

Greetings Councilmember Noecker - I hope that you and your family are doing okay during this challenging time!

You will not be surprised to hear that I strongly support the proposed **tenant protections ordinance** for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

The COVID-19 crisis has made it even more clear that our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure stability and safety for all in our community, now and in the future.

As you know, this ordinance was developed through a process that spanned years and included engagement sessions in every city ward and discussions with over 50 community organizations, with many stakeholder perspectives included. After all that, and knowing the scale of the crisis we face, I hope that you are already on board and ready to support the ordinance.

Thank you in advance for your support!

Sarah Gleason
651-335-4507
sarahgleason@mac.com

Hi Ms. Noecker! Wanted to drop a note to express my full support for the Tenant Rights ordinance. Too many renters have had to deal with excessive deposits, insufficient notice of not having a lease renewed, and other gross overreaches. This ordinance is simple and fair to both renters and landlords. Thank you!

TraciTraci Nigon
(507) 202-2001
traci.nigon@gmail.com

Dear Council Member Noecker,

My name is Liban Mohamed and I'm a renter. I am a constituent of your Ward and leader in ISALAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- Just cause notice
- Advance notice of sale
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

- Liban Mohamed
- David Bean

- Mary Fratto
- Elizabeth Brine
- Myrna Nelson
- Stephanie Stoessel, Chair St. Paul/ East Metro ISAIHA Caucus
- Zoe Kourajian

As a property manager for non-profit developers/management (Aeon/Project for Pride) for over a decade (currently in ward 1, 2 and 3 with PPL), I fully support the tenant protection ordinance to be considered by the City Council. I have spent my career in housing/serving largely folks that don't meet the typical market rate criteria, and can tell you anecdotally the things that impact a persons ability to be a good tenant and neighbor are not reflected in those criteria. PPL also partnered with other community and housing organization to dig into the real implications of specifically criminal background in criteria [here](#).

I also live in Ward 2 and am an Area Coordinator for the Fort Road Federation. As a citizen of this community, I value diversity and equity. Under current laws, property owners and managers have latitude in selection plans and termination policies to be racist, classist, and ableist. I further believe that many landlords exploit those policies out of ignorance or lack of information, and not because it benefits their bottom line.

I hope you will all support this ordinance when it comes up for vote.

Tanya Beck
Property Manager - Saint Paul

Dear Councilmember Jalali and Mr. Privratsky,

I am writing as a resident of Ward 4 in support of the SAFE Housing Tenant Protection Ordinance that will be discussed at the May 20 city council meeting.

I have been a renter in St. Paul for 4 years. I have been fortunate enough to afford decent rentals and to have competent landlords, but that is by no means the case across our city, especially for renters with lower incomes. I am so glad to see fellow renters like Mitra on the city council advancing legislation that will give us legal protections. Our ability to have safe housing should not be contingent on the whims of a landlord. In particular, I am impressed by the screening guidelines and just cause notice provisions of this ordinance. These provisions will give renters an opportunity to rent properties they have previously be excluded from solely because of their credit history or income.

I wanted to highlight another barrier to housing for St. Paul renters who receive housing subsidies through the federal Section 8 program. Oftentimes, voucher recipients cannot find housing because landlords have categorical exclusions for Section 8 beneficiaries. These landlords refuse to rent to recipients of housing subsidies solely because they are receiving a subsidy. The empirical research on the issue suggests that many landlords prefer not to rent to Section 8 tenants because of bias against low-income renters. These landlords will then categorically exclude these tenant under the guise of protesting the supposed administrative burdens of the program.

I have studied this issue and [published an article in the ABA Journal of Affordable Housing and Community Development](#) about how cities can use antidiscrimination law to protect Section 8 renters. Minneapolis recently passed an ordinance like this and it has been upheld at the Minnesota Court of Appeals. While now is likely not the right time to add additional components to the SAFE ordinance, I encourage you to consider an ordinance similar to Minneapolis's for future renter protections.

I happy to discuss this issue in more detail and help St. Paul craft an ordinance that would address the problem, while hopefully avoiding the legal challenges to the ordinance that were encountered in Minneapolis.

Best,

Derek Waller
2369 Doswell Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55108

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to urge your support of the Tenant Protections Ordinance under consideration. This comprehensive ordinance, developed after seeking input from many community members, has the potential to create a much more fair and equitable city.

Housing is a human right. Where we live affects everything else about our lives - our educational opportunities, our employment options, our access to health care, and so much more. When we all have access to stable housing, our community is stronger. The provisions of the ordinance will do much to make the power dynamic between housing providers and housing consumers more level, and will expand the housing choices available to renters. Given that over half of Saint Paul residents are renters, the positive impact of this ordinance will be significant.

I'm especially impressed by the clauses of the ordinance that pertain to conviction record screening, use of minimum income standards, and screening based on eviction history. Because our community is plagued by racial disparities in income, and because our criminal justice system is likewise rife with disparities based on race and ethnicity, these parts of the ordinance will act as much-needed correctives and help promote racial justice in Saint Paul.

For all of these reasons, I thank you for considering this ordinance and giving it your support.

Sincerely,
Erika L. Sanders

2005 Lincoln Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55105
Ward 4

Dear Council Member Thao,

My name is Teresa Mozur, a Saint Paul resident and homeowner living in Ward 1. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul, and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits will help ensure nobody is screened or shut out of a place to live they could otherwise afford

Just cause notice will standardize landlord best practices to ensure a legally defined and acceptable just cause is the reason for terminating a tenancy, curbing arbitrary and informal evictions and helping people stay in their homes

Advance notice of sale will slow down the rapid loss of NOAH in our communities that is fueling displacement and give preservation and affordable buyers more time to bring forth deals that could help tenants stay housed and improve our city

Tenant rights and responsibilities information will dramatically improve landlord-tenant relationships and help make sure every renter in our city knows what their rights and resources are

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now.

I hope you vote Yes on the ordinance to demonstrate your values and leadership on this issue.

Thanks,
Teresa
Teresa Mozur

Dear Councilmember Tolbert,

You'll probably be receiving a lot of emails such as the one below in postscript, pushed out by ISIAAH. I'm a supporter of ISIAAH, but they don't always think things through thoroughly.

PLEASE PLEASE be aware of unintended consequences. They say:

"Currently, landlords can simply not renew a tenant's lease for no reason, displacing tenants when they have done nothing wrong."

Note that this is a requirement when such a tenant receives county Bridge housing assistance.

My disabled loved one gets county housing funding, the county pays the lease. Last landlord sent a 60 day notice to vacate. The county required that there be no "cause" for eviction in order for my loved one to get the assistance transferred to a new landlord. That letter from the first landlord stating notice with no reason for eviction was IMPORTANT. In my understanding, the County requires that there's no reason.

If you change this, this might throw many tenants on assistance off their housing assistance. I don't pretend to know everything about this, but it seems to me they need to do more homework.

In this particular case, I'm sure if the landlord was required to provide a reason in order to evict (I think they were just tired after all these years of the low-level "nuisance" or "compliance" problems that come with a mentally ill or disabled tenant), they would have happily provided it, however that would have then voided my loved-one's housing assistance.

The landlord was being kind by providing no recordable reason. Thank heavens. I'm sure there are many cases where the landlord "eases out" a tenant they are tired of, and are glad to see them go with no harm done on either side ("cash for keys" I've heard it called).

I understand the need to protect families from eviction, but this part of this ordinance as written seems to me will increase homelessness among the most vulnerable, painting with too broad a brush.

At least, please seek staff guidance from the County on what they would do in these types of instances. Perhaps it is all fine, but on its face, it looks like one fix causes another break in the system elsewhere. County rules are hard enough to comply with -- I always say, "you need to be a genius to be mentally ill around here" -- and, the proposed new ordinance might be totally incompatible with County rules, and then how do you change those?

Please protect the disabled and elderly on county housing assistance.

.....

Sharon Sudman
399 Macalester St.
St. Paul MN 55105

Postscript

FROM ISAIAH

Dear Council Member X,

My name is [your name] and I'm a [resident/renter/homeowner]. I am a constituent of your Ward and leader in ISAIAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could also be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits
- Just cause notice
- Advance notice of sale
- Tenant rights and responsibilities information

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now. Thank you for your support.

YOUR NAME

Hello -

I'm writing in support of the tenant protections in ordinance 20-14.

I've been a renter in St. Paul for the last six years, renting in both Wards 1 and 7. This ordinance would have benefitted me personally by capping the security deposit a previous landlord demanded (and then never got back). I know that it would benefit even more renters who have been forced to move when their buildings were sold without notice and preventing arbitrary evictions.

Renters like me make up a majority of residents in St. Paul. These measures would be a strong start to making sure we are protected under the law.

Thank you.

Patrick Burke
250 Marshall Ave, Apt. 8
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dear Councilmember Jalali,

My name is Jake Rueter and I'm a constituent of your ward. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul, and ask that you please vote YES on the ordinance.

Now more than ever, our city needs comprehensive tenant protections to address rising displacement, help keep people in their homes and eliminate discrimination. Without this ordinance, tenants could be more vulnerable than ever in the wake of a pandemic and economic damage wrought by COVID-19. We already had a housing crisis before COVID-19 started; we need these protections to ensure future stability and safety for all in our community:

- Tenant screening criteria and a limit on security deposits will help ensure nobody is screened or shut out of a place to live they could otherwise afford
- Just cause notice will standardize landlord best practices to ensure a legally defined and acceptable just cause is the reason for terminating a tenancy, curbing arbitrary and informal evictions and helping people stay in their homes
- Advance notice of sale will slow down the rapid loss of NOAH in our communities that is fueling displacement and give preservation and affordable buyers more time to bring forth deals that could help tenants stay housed and improve our city

- Tenant rights and responsibilities information will dramatically improve landlord-tenant relationships and help make sure every renter in our city knows what their rights and resources are

As you know, this ordinance was developed over a process that spanned years of administrations, the current Council, engagement sessions in every city ward, and ongoing discussions with over 50 community organizations, with every stakeholder and perspective included.

Our housing crisis can't wait. The time to pass tenant protections is now.

Thanks for the tireless work you do day-in and day-out,

Jake Rueter
1347 Blair Ave

Hi, Councilmember Tolbert,

My name is Jake Grussing, a resident of Ward 3 (1295 Wellesley Avenue), and I'm writing to express my support for the S.A.F.E. Housing Tenant Protections ordinance currently before the city council.

I'm confident that you, as an elected official, have the right data in front of you and don't need me to rehash it. I'm privileged enough to have avoided the direct, personal impact of these issues, but I care about tenant protections and preventing families from being displaced.

I hope you will stand up for our renters by voting for the S.A.F.E. Housing Tenant Protections ordinance as is.

Sincerely,
Jake Grussing

Dear Council Member Jalali,

I am writing to you today to discourage you from enacting some of the proposed tenant protections. My wife and I own five duplexes in St. Paul, and like many small landlords, we do our best to provide safe, affordable, and decent housing for our tenants.

I really hope that you and your colleagues will be thoughtful about this, and take into consideration the pressures and challenges landlords face. These are very difficult times, and many of us are struggling to collect rent from tenants who have lost their jobs or have reduced income is due to the pandemic.

I would be especially concerned about having no choice but to rent to people with recent criminal history problems. I don't believe this would make the housing that we own safer, more stable, or more affordable. Also, I think it is inappropriate to require landlords to provide a reason for not renewing a lease. I can't think of any other business that is forced to serve customers against their will in a similar manner. Finally, putting restrictions on our ability to sell our properties will create significant problems.

If you haven't already, you should be sure to spend some time talking to those of us who are decent people who are simply trying to provide good, safe housing at a reasonable cost to our tenants. If you enact these kinds of onerous provisions, people like us will likely sell our properties and just be done with all of this. I can't imagine that is your intent, and I also can't imagine that these new proposals will lead to safe, stable, or affordable housing in the future.

<https://www.twincities.com/2020/05/14/st-paul-city-council-revives-proposed-tenant-protections/>

Jim McCorkell

St. Paul, MN

Dear Mr. Tolbert,

My name is Chris Flynn, and I'm writing to share concerns I have with the details of the S. A. F. E. housing tenant protections ordinance. I am currently renting my single family home on a temporary basis, while work has taken me outside the City of Saint Paul. This is the only property I own; I am not a professional landlord. Renting merely gives me financial flexibility while I work out of state, and my rental income is only slightly above the mortgage and maintenance costs.

While I support the overall spirit of this ordinance, I am concerned about the exact implementation of the background check and just cause notice. Regarding the background check section, it is critical that this include criminal records and credit history, as I am taking a very large risk with my most valuable asset by renting my home, and the most effective way to reduce this risk is with accurate background checks. An overly restrictive criteria could easily make that risk prohibitive, and myself and others would simply stop renting, requiring me to sell my home at significantly reduced value given the current economic outlook. Such sales would further reduce the availability of rental homes.

Second, regarding the fair notice requirement, I do intend to return to Saint Paul in the next 1-2 years at the conclusion of my renter's lease. However, the wording of this ordinance is critical, as it must allow me to return to my home at the end of a lease contract without fault from the tenant.

Please ensure that the S. A. F. E. housing ordinance protects tenants, but also keeps in mind the many non-professional landowners with limited resources.

Thank you,

Christopher M. Flynn

flynn175@gmail.com

XXXX Berkeley Ave

Saint Paul, MN

55105 (home)

Current mailing address

XXX US 22 East, office XXXX

Annandale, NJ

I support the SAFE housing agenda and urge you to vote yes.

Renters deserve to have safe and secure housing.

Tyler Teggatz

Ward 3

Testimonial on behalf of domestic violence survivors who rent

To: Rebecca Noecker, Councilperson, Ward 2

CC: Saint Paul City Council President Amy Brendmoen and all Saint Paul City Council Members

Date: May 15, 2020

From: Lauren Rimestad, worker at domestic violence shelter in Ward 2

Re: City of Saint Paul's Tenant Protection Ordinance 20-14

My name is Lauren, and I have worked at a nonprofit that provides crisis intervention, emergency shelter, and housing assistance and advocacy to victims/survivors of domestic violence. This nonprofit is located in Ward 2 of Saint Paul. As a worker at this organization, I have personally met and advocated for the needs of hundreds of victim/survivors in Saint Paul over the last four and a half years. I would like to share four stories of victims/survivors that illustrate how Ordinance 20-14 could benefit so many Saint Paul residents.

Background: No one should be forced to remain in a violent relationship because of a housing need. However, in reality housing needs are often what keep women in violent relationships. There continues to be many housing challenges including: barriers to accessing housing - e.g. required deposits, unlawful detainers or evictions (through no fault of their own due to a violent partner), a one-day hotel stay means a person no longer fits the "homeless" definition in order to access various programs; and increasing obstacles to securing safe housing due to reduced housing stock and a highly competitive rental market. Domestic violence is a leading cause of housing instability. The number one unmet need for domestic violence survivors is housing. For domestic violence survivors whose housing needs are unmet: 58% return to their abuser; 16% become homeless; and 6% end up living in their cars. (2013 NNEDV Minnesota Census Count Data) Also, survivors of domestic violence need safe housing, not only in the sense of affordable and stable housing, but also in the sense that it can be a safe place from stalking, with landlords who know how to appropriately address situations in which tenants are being stocked by abusers. Survivors need landlords who have a knowledge of the Safe at Home program as one of the resources they can offer tenants, for example - and safe housing that encourages positive community with neighbors and other tenants who can help reduce the impacts of isolation. In addition to safety and housing needs, survivors also need legal advocacy, credit help and financial counseling to overcome common impacts of financial abuse. This ordinance will be a supportive step in the right direction to help victim/survivors of domestic violence find the stability they need.

Abby's story: Screening criteria available and minimum income requirement

Abby* finally cobbled together enough money to move away from her abuser. He was on a two-week work trip-- that was all the time she had to find, secure, and move into a new place before he came back. She found an apartment and made an appointment with the landlord. She needed everything to go perfectly. Unfortunately, the landlord did not tell her that for his screening criteria, there were

minimum income requirements. Her income was not enough to rent the apartment. Abby had no time left. She lost the opportunity to move out of her abuser's apartment, and into a safe home. Her boyfriend returned and she had to wait for the next chance to run. He hurt her so bad, she went to the hospital and was referred to a domestic violence shelter where she shared this story. She is healing from the physical and emotional wounds and mourns the lost opportunity to have escaped on her own terms. She was ready to leave and knows that if she had been notified of the landlords' screening criteria beforehand, she would have had time to find another apartment.

Abby had cobbled together enough money to move away from her abuser, and had a two-week window to find, secure, and move into a new place before her boyfriend came back to town from a work trip. She found an apartment and made an appointment with the landlord. She figured if everything went well with the apartment viewing, she could have her things into the new place before her boyfriend returned. With the move in date fast approaching she needed everything to go perfectly. Unfortunately, the landlord did not tell her that his screening criteria required a credit check, rent history check, and that there were minimum income requirements. Her income wasn't enough to rent the apartment, so she lost that opportunity to move out of her boyfriend's apartment. She had no time left to seek, find and move into another apartment. Her boyfriend returned and she had to wait for the next opportunity to leave, which was a long time from then. He eventually hurt her so bad after that that she went to the emergency department and was referred to a domestic violence shelter where she shared this story. She is healing from the physical and emotional wounds of this relationship, and mourns the lost opportunity to have escaped on her own terms. She feels that had she known about the landlords' screening criteria beforehand, she would have had the time to find and move into another apartment.

Veronica's story: Rental application and security deposit fees

While staying at a domestic violence shelter, Veronica squared away enough funds to rent on her own. She had just enough for the security deposit, and first month's rent. She was not expecting to pay a holding fee and certainly wasn't expecting to be charged \$2,000 for a security deposit by the landlord, who cited her lack of rental history for the reason to require such a large sum. The domestic violence shelter had a 3-month time limit. She had to find another place to go immediately. Her abuser stayed in contact with Veronica's family and knew the decision she was up against. Assuming she couldn't find a landlord who would charge a lower security deposit, he made an offer she couldn't refuse: Give him all of the money she saved, and she could stay with him. Returning to her abuser felt like Veronica's only choice. But nothing changed. A year later, she came back to the shelter, badly hurt and forced to start over.

Veronica was staying at a domestic violence shelter and had squared away enough funds to begin renting on her own. However she had only just enough for the security deposit, first month's rent, and some extra for moving expenses. She was not expecting to have to pay a holding fee and certainly wasn't expecting to be charged \$2,000 for the security deposit by the landlord, who cited her lack of rental history for the reason to require such a high security deposit. The domestic violence shelter had a 3-month time limit on how long she could stay there, and she had to find another place to go immediately. Her abuser stayed in contact with a family member of Veronica's and knew the decision she was up against. Assuming she'd continue to have trouble finding an apartment that would charge a lower security deposit, he made her an offer she couldn't refuse: give him all of her money and she could stay with him for good. Sadly, she took the offer. She came back to the shelter a year later in terrible shape, starting all over again.

Cassie's story: Criminal background and time past

12 years ago, Cassie left her abusive boyfriend. When they were together, he often made her take the fall for him, sometimes with legal consequences. Once, she confessed to the police that she stole a car. It wasn't true, but her boyfriend was manipulative and told her he would be sent to prison if she didn't. Fast forward to the present: Her abuser nearly forgotten about, Cassie has a full-time job at a local business and makes enough to save up. She is 30 years old and looking forward to living alone with no roommates. She finds a dream duplex in a neighborhood in St. Paul where she grew up. With her life sorted out, she waits anxiously to hear back from the landlord about setting up an appointment to sign the lease. With no texts or calls from the landlord, she checks her email. Sure enough, there's a message! It reads, "unfortunately, due to your criminal background, we cannot lease this unit to you." Cassie is livid – she knows exactly what they're referring to. She is a hardworking, caring person who is too scared to even take a pen from a pen cup at a business. She knows how to fix a toilet and edge sidewalks. She was *perfect* for the duplex. Her heart broken, she realized that if landlords could hold that car theft charge against her, no questions asked, she would never shake the tarnish of her abusive ex-boyfriend.

Cassie's live-in boyfriend from 12 years ago had a habit of getting into complicated situations. Often, she had to "bail him out" by taking the fall for one thing or another, sometimes with legal consequences. She confessed to the police that it was she who stole a car and left it near their property, after her boyfriend told her he could be sent to prison for such an act. Her boyfriend and his friends stole the car and knew she could take the blame if needed. Fast forward to 12 years later, with that messy boyfriend nearly forgotten about, Cassie had a full-time job at a local small business and made enough to save up, while supporting her host's home costs. She was 30 years old and was looking forward to living alone with no roommates. She found a dream duplex in a neighborhood in St. Paul she lived in as a child. With her life sorted out, she waited anxiously to hear back from the landlord about setting up an appointment to sign the lease. With no texts or calls from the landlord, she figured she'd check her email just in case the landlord emailed her instead. Sure enough, an email was there! The email read, "unfortunately, due to your criminal background, we cannot lease this unit to you." Cassie was livid – she knew exactly what they were referring to. She was a nice, hardworking, caring person who was too scared to even take a pen from a pen cup at a business. She knew how to fix a toilet and edge the sidewalks. She knew she was PERFECT for the duplex! Her heart broken, she realized that as long as landlords could hold that car theft charge against her, she would never shake the tarnish of her abusive ex-boyfriend.

April's story: Credit score and DV

April's ex-boyfriend was the type to ask for help when he needed it – she admired that about him. But he would get angry when *she* asked for help. She was told by others that this was abusive behavior, but she didn't have any choice but to live with him and figured she just had to "put up with it." Her boyfriend would sometimes lose his temper to the point of choking or kicking her and yelling nonstop. She knew she was important to him: The credit cards, utility bills, and car loan were all in her name. He was important to her, too: He ran the bank accounts, handled the mail, answered phone calls on both of their phones, collected both their earnings, and paid bills. One day, he vanished. She heard he was living with a new girlfriend. Relieved, she decided to move out of the apartment, but no property management companies or landlords would rent to her. They told her that her credit score was too low. She met with a community agency to see what was wrong, and found out that the credit card bills went unpaid and that the car loan was way past due. Those were his responsibility, but he hadn't followed through. Sure enough, she had to stay in the same apartment. She went to sleep every night propped up against the apartment door fearing he would bust in.

April's boyfriend was the type to ask for help when he needed it – she always admired that about him. But she also noticed that he would get angry and frustrated when she would ask for help. She was told by others that this was abusive behavior, but that sounded like white noise when considering she didn't have any other choice but to live with him. She figured she just had to “put up with it” so life could go on as peacefully as possible. Her boyfriend would sometimes lose his temper to the point of choking or kicking her and yelling nonstop. She knew she was important to him, the credit cards, utility bills, and car loan were all in her name. He was important to her too, he ran the bank accounts, handled all of the mail, answered phone calls on both of their phones, collected both his and her earnings, and made sure the bills were paid. Then one day he vanished. A week later she heard he had a new girlfriend and was living with her. A little sad, but mostly relieved, she decided to move out of the apartment so there was no risk of him returning to her to hurt her or ask for more help. But the apartment search proved very difficult. No property management companies or landlords would rent to her. They told her that her credit score was too low. She met with a local community agency to find out what was wrong. She found out that the credit card bills went unpaid and that the car loan was way past due. Sure enough, she had to stay in her and her boyfriend's old apartment. She went to sleep every night for a month propped up against the apartment door fearing he would bust in. He returned eventually to their apartment, and things went back to the way they were.

***All names have been changed for confidentiality purposes.**

I think the SAFE Housing Ordinance has good intentions but the council has not given landlords time and a forum for input. The council should sit down with both single and multiple rental unit owners and come up with an ordinance that improves the rights of both renters and owners. One sided ordinances will drive unfavorable consequences for the St. Paul rental housing market. On another note, the council should be concentrating on what the COVID 19 pandemic is going to do to the city revenues over the next few years. Commercial real estate is going to take a huge hair cut in value. Rental vacancies are going to dramatically increase and without some tax relief, drive people out of the City of St Paul.

Sincerely, Nick Rolfes
1842 Wellesley Ave.

Council Members,

I'm writing to you as a renter in St. Paul asking you to support and vote for the Tenant Protections Ordinance as it is proposed without amendments that would weaken these protections. Renters are the majority of the population of the city, and more people of color are renters. At least half of the renters in our city are paying more for housing than they can afford in the middle of a housing crisis with an incredibly low 2% vacancy rate, one that especially impacts those who need affordable housing. The protections in this ordinance are even more critical in this COVID-19 pandemic.

The 90-day advance notice of sale provision is critical, especially in a tight housing market with insufficient affordable housing, for people to be able to find adequate housing. A month is not enough. This will not adversely affect landlords as they can still sell their property. This is the one that would help

me the most as a renter right now. We should also be working to develop policy to support renters' opportunity to purchase in the event of a building sale.

I am concerned that the proposed ordinance section on this advance notice provision specifies that the advance sale notice must have the required advisory language in English, Spanish, Somali, Karen, and Hmong. Considering that the Highland Park Public Library has storytime in Amharic, and the Saint Paul Public Library has published commissioned books in Amharic and Omoro due to need, other languages should be included in this requirement, with the addition of Amharic and Omoro at a minimum. Otherwise these residents would be further disenfranchised and more vulnerable. I'd also like to see more responsibility put on owners to proactively provide these notices in these languages where they know they are more common instead of putting the responsibility on the renter to request it, as the ordinance is currently drafted. There's no stated required response time for the owner to provide a written translation, which could eat up a significant part of the required notice period. Residents who need the notice in other languages than English deserve the same amount of protection period.

The other protections in the ordinance are also critical for many. The just cause notice protects renters, and landlords still have the ability to take action with renters who aren't meeting the requirements in their leases. The limits on security deposits are important for residents with lower incomes; coming up with the deposit can be a tremendous barrier for many. Many states limit security deposits to one month's rent. That's still a significant amount of money for many to front. Screening reforms are important to help address structural inequities in our society that have created disparate incarceration and discrimination, and a lot of criminal offenses have no significant effect on being able to pay rent or meet lease requirements. Renters should have easy access to information about their rights, resources, and responsibilities. (The city should also work on a database that enables it to mail directly to multifamily unit addresses, not just property owners, in cases such as notices of public hearings etc. By not having this ability, the city doesn't recognize and can't directly communicate with over half the city's residents.)

Work has been done for years with the city and community partners to bring us to this proposed ordinance. It's not the only work that needs be done to support renters, but it's an important start. Now is the critical time we need your leadership and action to support the majority of the residents in the city. The protections in this ordinance draw from best practices that have been shown to work in other cities. We need them in St. Paul, and we need them now. Please vote yes on Ordinance 20-14.

Sincerely,
Heidi Schallberg
An apartment in Highland 55116

Council Members, Here is my testimony regarding the move to limit security deposits.

Wayne Carlson

When I advertise an apartment for rent I give my requirements so there is no problem with discrimination. The requirements are that prospective residents make three times the rent, no UDs, no criminal and good credit. I also say that I may rent with a higher deposit if there are some dings in any one of these areas.

When I get the credit report I look for UD's and how much money do they owe a previous landlord and have they made any effort to pay. If they haven't paid it is a red flag that they have made the decision they don't have to pay that bill and I consider that the same attitude still exists when they rent from me. Further, I know that there may be attempts to collect the money by a garnishment and then there is no money to pay my rent. I would consider a deposit equal to whatever is owed to the previous landlord. I don't want to be a volunteer to have money not paid to me.

I then look to what bills they have chosen not to pay. If it is large medical bills or education loans I probably will not rate them against a prospective tenant so harshly. If there are a small series of cell phone delinquencies or small credit card bills not paid or repos, they are a red flag. They are people who don't have a high sense of responsibility to pay bills and don't know how to manage money. This is much like an addiction which without intervention is not going to change. It is a red flag that they are someone that is going to have to be chased for rent. I am too old for that and I am not in the education business. Again I am not going to volunteer to be stolen from. A high deposit is warranted.

If there is DWI and if there has been no efforts to stay sober, like treatment or going to AA, there is going to be a declination or a very high deposit. I have had people get drunk and spray paint all the cabinets, carpet, walls and floors with florescent green paint costing me over \$8,000 to repair. I know that the addiction causes police calls, violence, and the potential to not complete a lease because they are incarcerated or one party leaves the unit out of fear. This is not going to be a single deposit risk. I have to admit that one prospective resident wanted a unit badly and I told him I would do a \$5,000 deposit. He accepted and a year later he moved out and got his deposit back minus a carpet cleaning bill. Most importantly he got a good reference from me to a new landlord that he had actually changed his behavior. Sometimes it happens but it is a low percentage.

I recently took a risk on a tenant in a small unit with a triple deposit who was just out of treatment. When he left there was \$8,000 in damages beyond the deposit including broken windows which had just been installed, holes in all the doors, a broken security system so people could get in the building to buy drugs, stolen equipment from the building, fire extinguishers in the dryer, stolen keys for the laundry machines and money stolen, burned carpet. Druggers are not going to be rented to with a standard deposit.

It is easy to listen to someone saying that they had to pay a higher deposit and it wasn't warranted. That they just had one UD or that they will not ever drive drunk again or that now they are going to pay all their bill, they just don't want to pay the past bills. It is easy to listen to these stories but if you do you are going to be burned along with your existing residents.

I can assure you that after 40 years in the business I know this is baloney and that in most cases extra deposits are used up in damages or unpaid rent. There are just on-going attitudes by these substandard renters. I am not willing to rent to these people with a standard deposit. I might as well take the loss in vacancy until I get someone that is responsible.

I then check previous landlords and my screening company has checked the credit and criminal plus has on file problem tenants. If I find that there has been police calls, late night parties, drug sales, fighting or issues that disrupt the neighborhoods they come from I am not going to rent to them with any deposit. I have a community that I am moving people into and they deserve to have a quiet, reasonable place to

live. I also don't want to move them into the house next to any of you so you are kept awake at night with parties and noise when you need to get your sleep so you can be productive in the daylight hours.

I don't know where you are going to find housing that is of good quality for substandard renters without a risk premium in their deposit. I know there are people that don't check references or check credit but you can expect that sooner or later the property is going to be so bad that it can't be rented.

In most of my underwriting of substandard tenants, the results are that little of the deposit is returned because their behavior follows them and is continued

If you want to help these substandard renters the city or county should come up with the extra deposit and along with that demand that they go through training that will make them standard risk tenants. That would mean paying past bills, going to treatment, learning how to budget and subject to inspections to insure they know how to keep a clean and undamaged apartment.

I suspect that most good landlords are not going to take on the risk of substandard tenants without extra deposits.

You should also expect that the tax valuations on properties are going to decline as a result of keeping units vacant until a good tenant shows up or the expenses of rehabbing units that are demolished or rent not paid are going to drive the net incomes down and hence tax values and revenues.

WHERE IS THE CITY GOING TO HOUSE PEOPLE THAT DON'T GET HOUSING BECAUSE THEIR RISK IS TOO HIGH. MANY OF US HAS HOUSING VALUED AT OVER \$100,000 PER UNIT AND WE ARE GOING TO BE EXPECTED TO HAVE OUR PROPERTY DESTROYED. I DON'T THINK SO. MOST OF US ARE ALSO NOT GOING TO SUBJECT OUR GOOD TENANTS TO A SUBSTANDARD ENVIRONMENT CREATED BY SUBSTANDARD TENANTS.

These revisions being considered are short term feel good efforts but in the long run are going to be bad for the city of St. Paul. I missed the testimony in the Minneapolis decision and Minneapolis is most likely going to regret the decision. I think you should not adopt this proposal and have the substandard tenants migrate to Minneapolis where their substandard behaviors are rewarded.

Wayne Carlson

Hello, I am writing to express my support for the Tenant Protections Ordinance that's coming up for a vote. As a sole-supporting individual who works a full-time job but struggles to make ends meet (my rent for a 1 bedroom apartment has increased by \$104 during the past two years, from \$895 to \$999/month), I would appreciate fair and equitable policies to protect renter's rights -- and provide clear information about what those rights entail. Thank you,

Julie Comine
XXXX Goodrich Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105

Thies and Talle owns and manages four properties in Saint Paul including Afton View Apartments, Shamrock Court Apartments, Forest Place, and Sun Cliffe.

We would like to comment on two sections of the proposed tenant protection ordinance.

Any misdemeanor, gross misdemeanor or felony conviction stemming from the following traffic offenses: reckless driving, driving without a license, driving with a suspended or revoked license, and DUI that did not result in additional charges for injury to a person;

Although we understand not counting traffic violations against an applicant for an apartment and have never done so, the above restriction would cover vehicular crimes including, but not limited to DUIs. Our greatest concern involves applicants who have been convicted of several vehicular crimes in the last five years. In our many years of experience, residents who have many convictions in recent years are often not willing to follow the important rules and regulations that are needed for success in multi-family living with their neighbors. In addition, people who drive vehicles while intoxicated (especially those with multiple convictions) are a clear risk to their neighbors and their neighbors children who might be hit by a drunk driver while walking or driving on our properties.

If a landlord uses a minimum income test requiring an income equal to two and half (2.5) times the rent or higher, the landlord must allow an exception to that test where the applicant can demonstrate a history of successful rent payment with an income less than two and a half (2.5) times the rent.

Being approved for an apartment is only the first step to successful living in an apartment. If applicants rent apartments that they cannot afford and later get evicted when they are not able to afford the monthly rent payments, that does not help either the landlord or the tenant.

Thank you for considering our comments about this ordinance.

Kent Mortimer

Director of Compliance
952-906-7218 P
612-282-7413 C
952-949-0331 F
kmortimer@thiestalle.com

THIES & TALLE MANAGEMENT
470 West 78 Street, Suite 260
Chanhassen, MN 55317

Dear Council member Thao,

I am a landlord in St. Paul. I have owned and rented homes in St. Paul since 1999. I served as President of SPARL (St. Paul Association of Responsible Landlords) for many years. During that period, I worked directly with CM Prince when she was an activist for Daytons Bluff.

To save time, I will detail my concerns with the "SAFE" tenant protections:

1. I have two apartment buildings (9 and 10 unit buildings) where I have partnered with GUILD to house vulnerable adults. In the partnership, I agree to below market rent and GUILD provides the residents with social services. It is a great relationship – we have changed lives.

For these buildings, I have lowered my rental criteria in most areas, but increased my rental criteria for people with a violent, predatory, history. Section 193.04 now mandates that I lease to individuals with a predatory history. In other words, you require by law that I house predators and the vulnerable in the same housing complex. If this law passes, the legal exposure will force me to end the program.

2. Section 193.05 “just cause” implies that landlords kick out good tenants. I cherish my clean, quiet, and current residents. The only time I terminate a lease is if the resident is problematic and proving it requires a neighbor to testify. Most neighbors do not want to “put themselves out there against problematic neighbors.” Instead, I terminate the problematic resident without specifying a cause to protect the good tenants from retaliation. Section 193.05 is the most harmful law to good, affordable housing I have ever encountered.

I beg you to reconsider.

Best Regards, William Cullen

[WilliamRobert Apartment Advisors](#)

5100 Eden Avenue, Suite 102B

Edina, MN 55436

May 21, 2020

Attn: St. Paul City Council and Hamline-Midway Coalition

RE: Ordinance 20-14

My husband and I have lived in St. Paul's Hamline-Midway neighborhood for 19 years, and we have been landlords for nearly as long. We own three duplexes located within one mile of our home. We have always managed our properties ourselves, including renting, repairing and maintenance. Many of our tenants have rented from us for more than five years. We rarely raise rents and when we do it is an increase of less than 3%; therefore, our rents are below market rate. For example, about three years ago we completely renovated one of our 2-bedroom units and we rent it out for \$975 per month. The tenant pays for their electricity and heat, and the unit includes a washer and dryer. Our rents are reasonable, but we are not 'slum lords.'

I am writing to address some of my concerns about Ordinance 20-14, specifically the rules for applicant screening guidelines. We have had our share of terrible tenants who destroyed property and still owe us rent. We have also had many good tenants, most of whom looked less than ideal on paper, but we employ a holistic approach to deciding whether to lease to someone. Tenants who default on rent or destroy property are expensive and time-consuming, so landlords should have every right to exercise due diligence in deciding who to rent their property to, not only to protect themselves but also to protect the other tenants.

The proposed rules for how credit history, rental history, and criminal history can or cannot be used to disqualify a tenant candidate are too arbitrary and restrictive. Landlords should be allowed to use their own reasoning and analytical skills to determine whether entering a contract with a particular person exceeds their risk threshold. Here is an example of two possible applicants that both have evictions on their records but are quite different pertaining to risk:

- **Applicant A** was evicted 3.5-years ago with 5 prior evictions (I've seen worse), has no verifiable rental history since, and has had four different employers in the past three years. They have bad credit due to unpaid credit card, cell phone and cable bills.
- **Applicant B** was evicted a year ago due to a job loss. They had a steady work and rental history prior to that, and they are once again gainfully employed. They have bad credit due to a few unpaid medical bills.

I would have no reservations about accepting Applicant B, but Applicant A would need to have at least a more stable job history and some successful rental history within the past three years for me to be comfortable renting to them. As I understand the proposed applicant screening rules, I would be forced to accept Applicant A because their evictions were over three years ago. There should be some obligation on their part to demonstrate to a potential landlord that they're working on changing past behavioral patterns, even if it's by taking classes in life skills and money management.

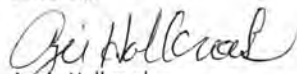
We have never disqualified a potential tenant based on any one thing. We look at the whole picture, which is why it is important that we are not bound to accept an applicant based on some arbitrary number of years since they were evicted, like that alone means they would be a successful tenant. It is when someone has a less than ideal rental history that the credit report can provide insight, either positive or negative. However, according to the proposed rules, we will not be able to consider the

contents of a credit report in our decision unless it shows unpaid utility bills or rent judgements. I have rarely encountered an applicant with good credit, but the credit report will show if someone has failed to pay any of their debts, or if they fell behind on bills due to some life event, like divorce, for example, which may also be the reason they were evicted. We understand that life events sometimes happen that can have negative financial effects. However, we also know that evictions and other financial problems can be caused by poor money management skills and/or irresponsibility, which are predictors for future financial problems (absent any related education or counseling).

My concerns about the rules pertaining to evictions and credit history also apply to criminal history. I am most concerned about applicants who have committed violent crimes or crimes of theft, fraud, or property damage. Again, landlords should be able to make their own decision about prospective tenants based on all the applicant's background information. What about the applicant whose prison sentence ended 11 years ago for a violent crime, and since then was convicted of a gross misdemeanor over 3 years ago and has a recent DUI, plus a somewhat unstable employment history? Would you feel confident about this applicant if you were a landlord? Compare that applicant to one who finished serving their sentence 11 years ago for a violent crime and has lived a rather quiet life since.

I hope that you consider my concerns and rethink some of the proposed rules related to tenant screening. I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,



Angie Holbrook
St. Paul Resident and Landlord

Please, accept this communication as my total support of the SAFE Housing Ordinance.

It is definitely not a level playing field for renters and landlords in St. Paul. As a retired real estate broker, having moved here 4 years ago from the NY area, I discovered that many of the leases and tenant handbooks were one sided. They support landlords in all situations and put tenants at a major disadvantage.

Hopefully the Council will support this common sense ordinance to assist renters while still protecting landlords.

Thank you for your attention in this most important matter.

Respectfully,

Frank Grassi
St. Paul, MN 55101

From: Chad Skally <chad@skally.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 26, 2020 10:12 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; McMahon, Melanie (CI-StPaul) <Melanie.McMahon@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Kelley, Pattie (CI-StPaul) <pattie.kelley@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Cc: Jeff Arnold <jarnold@lakewoodenterprises.com>; Alisa Lein <alisalein@gmail.com>
Subject: Follow-up from phone call regarding proposed tenant protections ordinance.

Dear Councilmember Tolbert,
thank you for talking to us on the phone. Here are specific options we hope you consider when making amendments to the proposed tenant protections ordinance:

Option 1. Acknowledge that one set of key stakeholders, property owners, were left out of the opportunity for meaningful participation in language drafting. Table the proposed ordinance in its current form and request that staff work with all the stakeholders in developing a more inclusive ordinance.

Option 2. Amend the current proposed ordinance based on several key issues that have been raised including (attached are specific recommendations for changes to the ordinance):

- remove the "just cause" language or remove it from non-renewals,
- match the Minneapolis ordinance in terms of screening criteria,
- allow a higher security deposit, 3x monthly rent instead of 1x,
- allow the income test to be set at 3x monthly rent, and
- add follow-up research in the next 2 years to see the impact if ordinance is passed.

In addition to options 1 and 2 we feel there are many great ideas not included in this one sided proposal

that can protect renters and increase affordable housing in Saint Paul. Here is a list of ideas that we hope City staff will follow up with us on that can be incorporated into renter related ordinances the City adopts:

- Incentivize the development of affordable housing.
 - Support non-profits who provide affordable housing.
 - Provide a renters fund to support residents who are chronically late with their rent payments.
 - More aggressively solicit owners to participate in the 4d affordable housing program.
 - Investigate ways to expand the 4d affordable housing program.
 - Provide more education resources to residents geared towards renters rights in MN, budgeting 101, handling issues with your neighbors or property manager.
 - Incentivize the development of the vacant properties in the City for affordable housing.
- Thank you for taking the time to develop a more inclusive renter protection ordinance that can be more beneficial and less detrimental to our City,

Jeff Arnold, Alisa Lein, and Chad Skally

Proposed Ordinance Changes

Ordinance 20-14, Tenant Protections, Version 3 as found on <https://stpaul.legistar.com>

Author: Jeffrey Arnold

Date: 5/25/2020

Additions shown in red underlined font.

Deletions shown in ~~red strikethrough font~~.

Summary list of changes:

Section 1

- Replaced hyperbolic language about rise in rent prices
- Provided introductory language about Individualized Assessments as stated in the Minneapolis companion ordinance
- Provided context for eviction statistics
- Removed language about “Informal Evictions” as it is not defined anywhere in the document and links to stated research are unavailable

Section 2

193.01 Definitions

- Removed unused definitions
- Changed definition of affordable building/unit to match Minneapolis at 5 or more units and 60% AMI

193.02 Tenant Rights Education

- No changes

193.03 Security Deposits

- Changed security deposit limit to 3 times monthly rent instead of 1
- Removed pre-paid rent limitation

193.04 Tenant Screening Criteria

- Removed and added language to match Minneapolis companion ordinance as closely as possible while still making proper references within this ordinance

193.05 Just Cause for Lease Termination

- Removed entirely. As currently written this applies to every residential lease in the City all the time and doubtful it could stand up to a court challenge.

193.06 Advance Notice of Sale

- Changed notice period from 90 to 60 days to match Minneapolis

193.08 Notice of Sale

- No changes

193.09 Enforcement, penalties, and prohibitions

- Removed unnecessary language referring to 193.05

Section 3

- Changed implementation date from 1/1/2021 to 6/1/2021

Title

Creating Chapter 193 of the Legislative Code (Title XIX) pertaining to Tenant Protections.

Body

Section 1

WHEREAS, under City Council RES 89-1273, the Council directed the creation of a fair housing workgroup to make policy and budget recommendations “with the goal of eliminating housing disparities, lowering barriers to affordable housing, and ensuring access to economic opportunity in the City of Saint Paul”; and

WHEREAS, under City Council RES 17-2064, the Council directed the development of a fair housing strategic plan “to continue to research and work with housing partners on strategies to further Fair Housing goals such as...improved tenant protections, Tenant Remedies Actions, Advance Notice of Sale policy, gentrification studies, just cause eviction, non-discrimination policies, and others”; and

WHEREAS, under City RES 18-1204, the City Council acknowledged that “the housing crisis in our city and region, and the urgent need to address the crisis as our population grows,”; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the City created the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, with five objectives: to meet the needs of those with the lowest incomes by increasing supply; to invest in low and moderate income residents by investing in existing supply; to explore innovative approaches to meeting housing needs; to build wealth for residents and communities; and to promote fair access to housing for us all; and .

WHEREAS, in 2019, the Office of Financial Empowerment, which housed the Fair Housing Coordinator Position, was created and subsequently developed the framework for a citywide fair housing strategy identifying decreasing housing displacement, increasing housing access and affirmatively furthering fair housing as the overall objectives; and

WHEREAS, Tenant Protections is one of four focus areas including education and engagement, enforcement and compliance, and preservation and production, to address strategy objectives based on the current housing landscape; and

WHEREAS, stagnant wages, ~~skyrocketing~~ rising rents, a lack of affordable housing, and a consistently low housing vacancy rate are making it harder for Saint Paul residents to find housing and to afford it over time; and

WHEREAS, the number of renters has increased by 12 percent from 2000-2016 and the City of Saint Paul has now become a renter-majority city, with 51% (57,621) of City residents being renters; and

WHEREAS, renters are disproportionately people of color and are disproportionately representative of individuals from low wealth backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, demographically 83% of African-American households are renting, compared to 41% of White households; and

WHEREAS, more than half of our renter households earn 60 percent or less of the Area Median Income, and more than half of our renter households of color earn 30 percent or less of the Area Median Income; and

WHEREAS, in St. Paul, 51 percent of our renter households are housing-cost burdened, resulting in seventy-five percent of our low-income renter households being housing cost burdened and thirty-nine percent being severely housing cost burdened; and

WHEREAS, the Fair Housing Act of 1968 requires that the City affirmatively further fair housing, meaning the City must take meaningful action to overcome historic patterns of segregation, promote fair housing choice, and foster inclusive communities that are free from discrimination; and

WHEREAS, in April 2016, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development issued warning that blanket policies of refusal to rent to people with criminal records could violate the Fair Housing Act if “without justification, their burden falls more often on renters or other housing market participants of one race or national origin over another”; and

WHEREAS, The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development identified individualized assessments as the preferred mechanism for housing providers to fairly screen individuals with criminal history barriers; and

WHEREAS, as of January 1, 2020, people of color make up 47.9 percent of the MN prison population, but only 15.9 percent of our state population; and

WHEREAS, criminal justice research supports that the effect of a criminal offense on a residents housing outcome declines over time and becomes insignificant; and

WHEREAS, our current credit scoring system has a disparate impact on people and communities of color, rooted in a long history of housing discrimination and wealth inequities even though credit score itself does not always reflect positive rental history or timely rent payments ~~of probability of on-time rent payments~~; and

WHEREAS, in 2017 there were an estimated 1,710 residential evictions filed against tenants in the City of Saint Paul which represents approximately 2.6% of rental households; and

WHEREAS, E evictions, regardless of outcome, impact a renter's ability to secure future housing; ~~and Research suggests that "Informal evictions" occurring outside of the court process are occurring at twice the rate of formal evictions~~; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul has approximately 11,000 units of housing which are considered Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) affordable at or below 60 percent Area Median Income and NOAH buildings are most at risk for ownership changes; and

WHEREAS, historical and ongoing discrimination in housing makes tenant protections a fair housing, racial equity, and economic justice imperative; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Saint Paul does Ordain:

Section 2

Chapter 193 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code is hereby created to read as follows:

Sec. 193.01 Definitions.

For the purposes of this Chapter, the following terms shall have the meaning ascribed to them in this section.

- (1) Affordable Housing Building shall mean a multiple-family rental housing building having ~~three (3)~~ five (5) or more dwelling units where at least twenty (20) percent of the units rent for an amount that is affordable at no more than thirty (30) percent of income to households at or below ~~eighty (80)~~ sixty (60) percent of area median income, as most recently determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development for Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) purposes, as adjusted for household size and number of bedrooms.
- (2) Affordable Housing Dwelling Unit shall mean a rental dwelling unit in an affordable housing building that rents for an amount that is affordable to households at or below ~~eighty (80)~~ sixty (60) percent of Area Median Income, as most recently determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, as adjusted for household size and number of bedrooms.
- (3) Available for Sale shall mean the earliest implementation of any of the following actions ~~including, but not limited to~~: negotiating to enter into a purchase agreement that includes an affordable housing building, advertising the sale of an affordable housing building, entering into a listing agreement to sell an affordable housing building, or posting a sign that an affordable housing building is for sale.
- (4) *For Cause* shall mean that the tenant or a member of the tenant's household materially violated a term of the lease ~~in accordance with Sec. 193.05(a)~~.
- (5) *Cure the Deficiency* shall mean that a tenant pays all monies rightfully owed, or fully complies with an order to correct a lease violation or notice to cease an activity that is in violation of a lease.

~~(6) Displacement Dwelling Unit shall mean the dwelling unit from which a tenant was displaced pursuant to Sec. 193.05(5) or (7).~~

(67) *Eviction* shall mean a summary court proceeding to remove a tenant or occupant from, or otherwise recover possession of, real property by the process of law, pursuant to Minn. Stat. Ch. 504B.

~~(78) Family Member shall mean a property owner's child, step-child, adopted child, foster child, adult child, spouse, sibling, parent, step-parent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandchild, grandparent, or registered domestic partner as defined by Saint Paul Code of Ordinances section 186.02 and any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the property owner is the equivalent of a family relationship.~~

(89) *Landlord* shall mean the property owner or agent of the property owner.

(910) *Lease* shall mean an oral or written agreement creating a tenancy in real property.

~~(1011) Rental Application Fee shall mean a fee paid by the potential tenant to a landlord, in order for the landlord to screen the background of the potential tenant before signing the lease.~~

(1112) *Relocation Assistance* shall mean a payment in an amount equal to three times the rental housing affordability limit at sixty (60) percent of Area Median Income for the Twin Cities metro area as published by the Metropolitan Council. Annually updated payments calculations can be located on the met council websites Affordability Limits for Ownership and Rental Housing: <https://metrocouncil.org/>

~~(1213) Security Deposit shall have the meaning stated in Minnesota Statutes, section 504B.178.~~

~~(1314) Single Month Rent shall have the following meaning: for a lease in which rent is paid once each month in the same amount, single month rent means that amount. When a tenant's rent is supplemented by a rental subsidy, rent means the total contract rent for the dwelling unit. For a lease in which rent is paid once each period in the same amount but the period is not one (1) month, single month rent means that the amount paid per period divided by the number of days in the period and then multiplied by thirty (30). For other leases, single month rent means the total amount of rent due under the anticipated length of the lease divided by the number of days in the anticipated length of the lease and then multiplied by thirty (30).~~

~~(15) Substantially Equivalent Replacement Unit shall mean a dwelling unit which is decent, safe and sanitary, contains at least the same number of bedrooms and other living areas as the Displacement Dwelling Unit, and is available at a Substantially Similar Rental Rate within the neighborhood district of the Displacement Dwelling Unit. Perfect comparability is not required.~~

~~(16) Substantially Similar Rental Rate shall mean the Displacement Dwelling Unit rental rate plus five percent (5%) or minus ten percent (10%) of the contract rate for a Single Month Rent.~~

(1417) *Tenant* shall mean an authorized occupant of a residential rental building under a lease or contract, whether oral or written.

~~(1518)~~ *Tenant Protection Period* shall mean the period that commences with the transfer of ownership of an affordable housing building and runs through the end of the ninety (90) calendar days following the month in which written notice of sale is delivered to each affordable housing dwelling unit tenant pursuant to Sec. 193.08(a).

~~(1619)~~ *Transfer of Ownership* shall mean any conveyance of title to an affordable housing building, whether legal or equitable, voluntary or involuntary, resulting in a transfer of control of the building, effective as of the earlier of the date of delivery of the instrument of conveyance or the date the new owner takes possession.

~~(1720) Termination of Tenancy shall mean the end of a tenancy following a written notice given by a landlord to a tenant requiring the tenant to move, including nonrenewal of lease.~~

Sec. 193.02 Tenant rights information packets and tenant rights posters.

(a) Tenant rights information packets and posters for landlords and tenants. The Office of Financial Empowerment (the Office) will create and maintain a Tenant Rights Information Packet that includes:

(1) A summary of the City of Saint Paul Chapter 193 (Tenant Protections), the Minnesota Attorney General's booklet on Landlords and Tenants Rights and Responsibilities pursuant to Minnesota Statutes §504B.275, and a summary of federal fair housing laws describing the respective rights, obligations, and remedies of landlords and tenants thereunder; and

(2) A list of tenant resources, including but not limited to: information regarding community organizations, government departments, and other entities and organizations that tenants can use to support their housing stability, seek legal advocacy, and provide information or resources for other housing needs.

(b) Tenant Rights Information Poster. The Office of Financial Empowerment will create and maintain a poster summarizing tenant rights and responsibilities that includes a summary of City of Saint Paul Chapter 193 (Tenant Protections).

(c) Online availability. The Office will make the information packets and posters described in Sec. 193.02 available online.

(d) Non-English versions. The poster and packet will be printed in English and any other languages that the department determines are needed to notify tenants of their rights under this chapter.

Sec. 193.03. Security deposits.

(a) Limit on security deposit amount. No landlord shall demand, charge, accept, or retain from a tenant more than three (3) times a single month's rent as a security deposit.

~~(b) Pre-paid rent limitation. No landlord shall demand, charge, accept, or retain from a tenant pre-paid rent an amount that exceeds the equivalent of one month's rent. This provision should not be read to prohibit a landlord from demanding, charging, accepting, or retaining a security deposit, pet deposit, or application fees, pursuant to Sec. 54.03 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code.~~

- (c) Governing law. Any security deposit furnished herein shall be governed by the provisions of Minnesota Statutes, Section 504B.178, together with this section.

Sec. 193.04. Applicant screening guidelines for prospective tenants.

- (a) Screening criteria made available. Before accepting applications for rental housing, a landlord must ~~provide written rental screening criteria to all applicants~~ make readily available to all applicants the landlord's rental screening criteria in as much detail as is feasible.

- (b) ~~Uniform screening criteria. A landlord must apply uniform screening criteria and cannot disqualify an applicant for any of the following reasons:~~

~~(1) Criminal history.~~

- ~~a. Any arrest or charge that did not result in conviction of a crime;~~
- ~~b. Participation in or completion of a diversion or a deferral of judgment program, including but not limited to: pre-charge or pretrial diversion, stay of adjudication, continuance for dismissal, or a continuance without prosecution;~~
- ~~c. Any conviction that has been vacated or expunged;~~
- ~~d. Any conviction for a crime that is no longer illegal in the state of Minnesota;~~
- ~~e. Any conviction or any other determination or adjudication in the juvenile justice system, except under procedures pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 260B.130.~~
- ~~f. A petty misdemeanor offense is not a criminal offense. For the purposes of this Chapter, a petty misdemeanor cannot be grounds for a denial;~~
- ~~g. Any misdemeanor, gross misdemeanor or felony conviction stemming from the following traffic offenses: reckless driving, driving without a license, driving with a suspended or revoked license, and DUI that did not result in additional charges for injury to a person;~~
- ~~h. Any conviction for misdemeanor or gross misdemeanor offenses for which the dates of sentencing are older than three (3) years;~~
- ~~i. Except as indicated in paragraph (j) below, any criminal conviction for felony offenses for which the dates of sentencing are older than seven (7) years; however, a landlord may deny an applicant who has been convicted of the illegal manufacture or distribution of a controlled substance as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802), or for those same offenses that mandate denial of tenancy in federally assisted housing subject to federal regulations, including but not limited to when any member of the household is subject to a lifetime sex offender registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program.~~
- ~~j. Any criminal conviction for the following felony offenses for which the dates of sentencing are older than ten (10) years: first-degree assault (Minnesota Statutes section 609.221), first-degree arson (Minnesota Statutes section 609.561), or aggravated robbery (Minnesota Statutes section 609.245), first-degree murder (Minnesota Statutes section 609.185), second-degree murder~~

~~(Minnesota Statutes section 609.19), third-degree murder (Minnesota Statutes 609.195), first-degree manslaughter (Minnesota Statutes 609.20, subs. 1, 2, and 5), kidnapping (Minnesota Statutes section 609.25, subd. 2(2)), or first-degree criminal sexual conduct (Minnesota Statutes section 609.342, subs. 1(b) and (g)).~~

Inclusive screening criteria. A landlord must either conduct the individualized assessment required by subdivision (d) below, or apply inclusive screening criteria that do not reject an applicant for any of the following reasons:

(1) Criminal history.

a. Any arrest in an inactive case that did not result in conviction;

b. Participation in or completion of a diversion or a deferral of judgment program, including stays of adjudication and continuances for dismissal or without prosecution;

c. Any conviction that has been vacated or expunged, or for which the applicant received a stay of imposition of sentencing and complied with the terms of the stay;

d. Any conviction for a crime that is no longer illegal in the state of Minnesota;

e. Any conviction or any other determination or adjudication in the juvenile justice system;

f. Any conviction for misdemeanor offenses for which the dates of sentencing are older than three (3) years;

g. Any criminal conviction for felony offenses for which the dates of sentencing are older than seven (7) years; however, a landlord may deny an applicant who has been convicted of the illegal manufacture or distribution of a controlled substance as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802) or for those same offenses that mandate denial of tenancy in federally assisted housing subject to federal regulations, including but not limited to when any member of the household is subject to a lifetime sex offender registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program; or

h. Any criminal conviction for the following felony offenses for which the dates of sentencing are older than ten (10) years: first-degree assault (Minnesota Statutes section 609.221), first-degree arson (Minnesota Statutes section 609.561), or aggravated robbery (Minnesota Statutes section 609.245).

(2) Credit history.

a. Credit score by itself; however, a landlord may use credit report information to the extent the report demonstrates a failure to pay rent or utility bills, although information within a credit report directly relevant to fitness as a tenant can be relied upon by a landlord; or

b. Insufficient credit history, unless the applicant in bad faith withholds credit history information that might otherwise form a basis for denial.

(3) Rental history.

- a. An eviction action pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 504B or other equivalents in other states if the action;

1. Was dismissed or resulted in a judgment for the applicant before the applicant submits the application;

2. Was settled with no judgment or writ of recovery issued that was entered one (1) or more years before the applicant submits the application;

3. Resulted in a judgment against the applicant that was entered three (3) or more years before the applicant submits the application; ~~occurred three (3) or more years before the applicant submits the application; however, eviction actions resulting in a judgment against the tenant may be used to disqualify a tenant if such judgment occurred in the three years prior to the application;~~

- b. Insufficient rental history, unless the applicant in bad faith withholds rental history information that might otherwise form a basis for denial.

- c. If a landlord uses a minimum income test requiring an income equal to ~~two and half (2.5)~~three (3) times the rent or higher, the landlord must allow an exception to that test where the applicant can demonstrate a history of successful rent payment with an income less than ~~two and a half (2.5)~~three (3) times the rent.

- ~~d. Exception. Whenever local, state, or federal funding or loan requirements for tenant screening conflict with any portion of section Sec. 193.04, the funding or loan requirements will take precedence over only those portions in conflict.~~

(d) Individualized assessment. A landlord that applies screening criteria that are more prohibitive than the inclusive screening criteria set forth in subdivision (c) must conduct an individualized assessment for any basis upon which the landlord intends to deny an application. In evaluating an applicant using individualized assessment, a landlord must accept and consider all supplemental evidence provided with a completed application to explain, justify, or negate the relevance of potentially negative information revealed by screening. Supplemental evidence refers to any written information submitted by the applicant in addition to that provided on the landlord's form application that the applicant believes to be relevant to the applicant's predicted performance as a tenant. When evaluating the effect of supplemental evidence on a landlord's decision of acceptance or denial of an applicant, the landlord must also consider:

(1) The nature and severity of the incidents that would lead to a denial;

(2) The number and type of the incidents;

(3) The time that has elapsed since the date the incidents occurred; and

(4) The age of the individual at the time the incidents occurred.

(e) Denials.

(1) Inclusive screening criteria. If a denial is based on the inclusive screening criteria of subdivision (c), a landlord shall notify the applicant in writing within fourteen (14) days of rejecting a rental application and identify the specific criteria the applicant failed to meet. Before denying an applicant for criminal history, a landlord must consider supplemental evidence provided by the applicant if provided at the time of application submittal.

(2) Individualized assessment. After performing an individualized assessment pursuant to subdivision (d), a landlord may deny an applicant if the denial is non-discriminatory in accordance with the Fair Housing Act. A landlord shall notify the applicant within fourteen (14) days of rejecting a rental application and such notification shall include the following:

a. The basis for denial; and

b. The supplemental evidence, if any, that the landlord considered and an explanation of the reasons that the supplemental evidence did not adequately compensate for the factors that informed the landlord's decision to reject the application.

The notification shall be in writing and retained by the landlord for a period of two (2) years. A landlord shall provide a copy to the department of regulatory services upon request of the director of regulatory services or the director's designee.

(f) Exception. Whenever local, state, or federal funding or loan requirements for tenant screening conflict with any portion of section Sec. 193.04, the funding or loan requirements will take precedence over only those portions in conflict.

(g) Enforcement. In addition to any other remedy available at equity or law, failure to comply with the provisions of this section 193.04 may result in criminal prosecution, and/or administrative fines, restrictions, or penalties as provided in Sec 193.07. A notice of violation shall not be required in order to establish or enforce a violation of this section. Any tenant aggrieved by a landlord's noncompliance with this section may seek redress in any court of competent jurisdiction to the extent permitted by law.

(h) Severability. If any of the parts or provisions of this section or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid or unconstitutional by a decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this section, including the application of such part or provisions to persons or circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid, shall not be affected thereby and shall continue in full force and effect. To this end, the provisions of this section are severable.

~~Sec. 193.05. — Just cause notice for tenants.~~

~~(a) — Just cause notice. A landlord may not issue a notice terminating tenancy unless the landlord is able to establish one or more of the following grounds:~~

~~(1) — Non-payment of rent. The tenant fails to Cure the Deficiency after receiving a non-payment notice from the landlord, and the landlord does not pursue a valid non-payment eviction action under Minn. Stat. § 504B.291, subd. 1(a), but decides to terminate tenancy at the end of the lease.~~

~~(2) — Repeated late payment of rent. The tenant repeatedly makes late payments of rent, no fewer than five times in a 12-month period. The landlord must provide the tenant with notice following a late payment that a subsequent late payment~~

~~may be grounds for termination of tenancy. If the tenant continues to make a late payment on no fewer than five occasions per year, the landlord must give the tenant notice to vacate at least equal to the notice period outlined in the original lease agreement terms.~~

- ~~(3) Material non-compliance. After receiving a written notice to cease from the landlord, the tenant continues, or fails to Cure the Deficiency, to a material breach of the lease. This subsection shall not diminish the rights of a landlord, if any, to terminate a lease for actions permitted under Minn. Stat. § 504B.281, et seq.~~

- ~~(4) Refusal to renew. The tenant refuses to renew or extend the lease within fifteen to thirty days after the landlord requests in writing, after the lease expires, that the tenant do so. The landlord shall give the tenant notice to vacate at least equal to the notice period outlined in the original lease agreement terms following the tenant's refusal to renew or extend the lease. This subsection shall in no way diminish the fifteen to thirty day notice period as required by Minn. Stat. 504B.145 for leases with automatic renewal provisions.~~

- ~~(5) Occupancy by property owner or family member. The property owner, in good faith, seeks to recover possession of the dwelling unit so that the property owner or a family member may occupy the unit as that person's principal residence. The property owner or family member must move into the unit within 90 days from the tenant's vacation. If a substantially equivalent replacement unit is vacant and available, that unit must be made available to the tenant at a substantially similar rental rate as the tenant's current lease.~~

- ~~(6) Building demolition and dwelling unit conversion. The landlord (i) elects to demolish the building, convert it to a cooperative provided the landlord complies with the provisions of Minn. Stat. Ch. 515B, or convert it to nonresidential use; provided that, the landlord must obtain a permit necessary to demolish or change the use before terminating any tenancy, or (ii) the landlord seeks, in good faith, to recover the unit to sell it in accordance with a condominium conversion, provided the landlord complies with the provisions of Minn. Stat. Ch. 515B, or (iii) the dwelling unit is being converted to a unit subsidized under a local, state or federal housing program and the tenant does not qualify to rent the unit under that program.~~

- ~~(7) Rehab and renovation. The landlord seeks, in good faith, to recover possession of the dwelling unit that will render the unit uninhabitable for the duration of the rehabilitation or renovation. The landlord must provide 90 days' written notice to the tenant, and shall provide Relocation Assistance to the tenant upon delivery of the written notice. If a substantially equivalent replacement unit is vacant and available in the building, that unit may be made available to the tenant at a substantially similar rental rate as the tenant's current lease.~~

- ~~(8) Complying with a government order to vacate. The landlord is complying with a government agency's order to vacate, order to abate, or any other order that necessitates the vacating of the dwelling unit as a result of a violation of Saint Paul city codes or any other provision of law.~~

~~(9) Occupancy conditioned on employment. The tenant's occupancy is conditioned upon employment on the property and the employment relationship is terminated.~~

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~~(10) Exceeding occupancy. Tenant exceeds the occupancy standards under City of Saint Paul Code 34.13, except for that no tenant may be evicted, denied a continuing tenancy, or denied a renewal of a lease on the basis of familial status commenced during the tenancy unless one year has elapsed from the commencement of the familial status and the landlord has given the tenant six months prior notice in writing, except in case of nonpayment of rent, damage to the premises, disturbance of other tenants, or other breach of the lease. Any provision, whether oral or written, of any lease or other agreement, whereby any provision of this section is waived by a tenant, is contrary to public policy and void.~~

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~~(b) Landlord responsibilities. All residential tenant leases, except for state licensed residential facilities and subject to all preemptory state and federal laws, shall include the following Just Cause Notice language:~~

~~The landlord under this lease shall not terminate or attempt to terminate the tenancy of any tenant unless the landlord can prove in court that just cause exists. The reasons for termination of tenancy listed in the City of Saint Paul's Just Cause Notice (Sec. 193.05), and no others, shall constitute just cause under this provision.~~

~~(c) Application. This section applies to every lease, written or oral.~~

~~(d) Notice requirements. With any termination notices required by law, landlords terminating any tenancy protected by this Chapter shall advise the affected tenant or tenants in writing of the reasons for the termination and the facts in support of those reasons.~~

Sec. 193.06. Advance notice of sale (of affordable housing).

(a) Notice of proposed sale. Any owner or representative of the owner who intends to make available for sale any affordable housing building shall notify the Director of the Department of Planning and Economic Development. The notice shall be on a form prescribed by the city stating the owner's intent to make available for sale the affordable housing building and which may include, at the city's sole discretion, some or all of the following information:

- (1) Owner's name, phone number, and mailing address;
- (2) Address of the affordable housing building that will be made available for sale;
- (3) Total number of dwelling units in the building; and
- (4) Number and type (e.g., efficiency, one bedroom, two bedrooms, etc.) of affordable housing dwelling units in the building and the contract rent for every dwelling unit in the building.

- (b) Manner and timing of notice. The notice shall be mailed, or hand delivered to the Director of the Department of Planning and Economic Development no later than ninety (90) days prior to the affordable housing building being made available for sale. The notice shall also be delivered directly to all affected tenants and include the following language requirement: "This is important information about your housing. If you do not understand it, have someone translate it for you now, or request a translation from your landlord." This advisory must be stated in the notice in the following languages: English, Spanish, Somali, Karen, and Hmong. This notice shall be delivered to all affected tenants no later than ~~ninety (90)~~sixty (60) days prior to the affordable housing building being made available for sale. Upon request by the tenant, the owner must provide a written translation of the notice into the tenant's preferred language of ones listed above.
- (c) Exclusions. This section shall not apply to the sale of transfer of title of an affordable housing building already subject to federal, state, or local rent or income restrictions that continue to remain in effect after the sale or transfer.

Sec 193.07 Relocation Assistance.

- (a) Relocation Assistance required. If, during the tenant protection period provided in 193.08(b), the new owner of an affordable housing building terminates or refuses to renew any affordable housing dwelling unit tenant's rental agreement without cause, then the new owner shall pay Relocation Assistance.
- (b) Relocation Assistance upon written notice of termination. If, during the tenant protection period provided in 193.08(b), the new owner of an affordable housing building raises any affordable housing dwelling unit tenant's rent, or rescreens an existing affordable housing dwelling unit tenant, and the tenant or new owner delivers written notice to terminate the rental agreement because the new owner has determined that tenant does not meet the new screening criteria, the new owner, shall within thirty (30) days of receiving or delivering written notice of termination of the rental agreement, pay relocation assistance to the tenant.

Sec 193.08 Notice of sale (of affordable housing).

- (a) Written notice required. When a transfer of ownership occurs, the new owner shall, within thirty (30) days of acquiring ownership of the property, deliver written notice to each affordable housing dwelling unit tenant of the building that the property is under new ownership and all of the following information:
- (1) Name, phone number, and mailing address of the new owner.
 - (2) The following statement: "Saint Paul Code of Ordinances Sec. 193.08 provides for a ninety (90) day tenant protection period for affordable housing dwelling unit tenants. Under Sec. 193.07, an affordable housing dwelling unit tenant may be entitled to relocation assistance from the new owner if the new owner terminates or does not renew (pursuant to the City of Saint Paul Just Cause Notice) the tenant's rental agreement without cause within the ninety (90) day tenant protection period following delivery of this notice. Affordable housing unit tenants may also be entitled to relocation assistance from the new owner if the owner raises the rent or initiates a tenant screening process within the tenant protection period and the tenant terminates their rental agreement."

- (3) Whether there will be any rent increase within the ninety (90) day tenant protection period with the amount of the rent increase and the date the rent increase will take effect.
 - (4) Whether the new owner will require existing affordable housing dwelling unit tenants to be rescreened to determine compliance with existing or modified residency screening criteria (pursuant to Sec. 193.04) during the ninety (90) day tenant protection period and, if so, a copy of the screening criteria.
 - (5) Whether the new owner will terminate or not renew rental agreements without cause during the ninety (90) day tenant protection period and, if so, notice to the affected affordable housing dwelling unit tenants whose rental agreements will terminate and the date the rental agreements will terminate.
 - (6) Whether, on the day immediately following the tenant protection period, the new owner intends to increase rent, require existing affordable housing dwelling unit tenants to be rescreened to determine compliance with existing or modified residency screening criteria, or terminate or not renew affordable housing dwelling unit rental agreements without cause.
- (b) Tenant Protection Period. The Tenant Protection Period commences with the transfer of ownership of an affordable housing building and runs through the end of the ninety (90) calendar days following the month in which written notice of sale is delivered to each affordable housing dwelling unit tenant pursuant to this Section.
- (c) Delivery of notice to Department of Safety and Inspections. This same written notice shall be furnished to the Director of the Department of Safety and Inspections at the same time notice is delivered to tenants. The new owner or representative of the new owner of an affordable housing building shall not terminate or not renew a tenant's rental agreement without cause, raise rent, or rescreen existing tenants during the tenant protection period without providing the notices required by this section. The notice shall also include the following language requirement: "This is important information about your housing. If you do not understand it, have someone translate it for you now, or request a translation from your landlord." This advisory must be stated in the notice in the following languages: Spanish, Somali, Karen, and Hmong. Upon request by the tenant, the owner must provide a written translation of the notice into the tenant's preferred language of ones listed above.

Sec. 193.09 Enforcement, penalties, and prohibitions.

- (a) Private right of action created Penalties for violation. In addition to any other remedy available at equity or law, failure to comply with the provisions of this Chapter may result in criminal prosecution, and/or administrative fines and restrictions. In addition, any tenant aggrieved by a landlord's noncompliance with this Chapter may seek redress in any court of competent jurisdiction to the extent permitted by law.
- ~~(b) Damages for violation of 193.05, Just Cause. A landlord who terminates a tenancy using a notice which references Sec. 193.05 as the ground for termination of tenancy, without fulfilling or carrying out the stated reason for or condition justifying the termination of such tenancy, shall be liable to such tenant in a private right for action for damages equal to relocation costs under Sec. 193.07(b), costs of suit or arbitration, and reasonable attorney's fees.~~

- (c) Administrative fines and notice requirement for violation of 193.08, Notice of Sale. A violation of Sec. 193.08 as to each affordable housing dwelling unit shall constitute a separate offense. A notice of violation shall not be required in order to establish or enforce a violation of the section. Notwithstanding any other provision to the contrary, the administrative fine for a violation of Sec 193.08 shall be the sum of the applicable amount of Relocation Assistance. Within thirty (35) days after receipt of this money by the City, the City shall pay to the displaced tenant of the affordable housing dwelling unit for which the violation occurred an amount equal to the Relocation Assistance as defined by this Chapter.
- (d) Prohibition of waiver. Any lease provision which waives or purports to waive any right, benefit or entitlement created in this Chapter shall be deemed void and of no lawful force or effect.
- ~~(e) 'No just cause' as lawful defense. In any action commenced to non-renew or to otherwise terminate the tenancy of any tenant, it shall be a defense to the action that there was no just cause for such non-renewal of lease or termination as required in this Section.~~
- (f) Mutual termination. This Section does not preclude a landlord and tenant from agreeing to a mutual termination.

SECTION 3

This Ordinance will take effect and be in force on January June 1, 2021 following its passage, approval, and publication.

CM Prince -

Even though I don't live in Ward 7 I wanted to reach out to you specifically about the Tenant Protections Ordinance because of your history of keeping equity and social justice front and center when it comes to city decision making. In my estimation this ordinance does just that.

We know that there is systemic racial and class inequity ingrained into our systems. A lot of the work that the City and City Council have been doing over the last several years has been trying to come to grips with and combat that - from the historic amount of affordable housing at the Ford Site, the 2040 plan's concentration on areas of poverty and inequity, and to the discussion and thought that went into our Climate Action Plan to ensure that the most vulnerable are protected in this time of climate crisis. I see this ordinance as an extension of that work especially when it comes to both the just cause and background screening elements of the ordinance.

Just as it's often difficult for people to find housing - it's also hard to keep. We know that lower income families tend to be among Saint Paul's 51% renter population. It's one thing to write a lease, have someone violate that lease, and then not extend renewal - but without just cause or lease violation - a family can be turned out just at the will of the landlord. By establishing 10 basic causes for non-renewal that would ensure that families who have not violated the terms of their lease can continue to have stable housing.

We also know that a key aspect to countering recidivism is stable housing. We can't continue to allow people to be further penalized once their sentence has been fulfilled. With no protections now - landlords can deny housing to people based on crimes committed basically at any time in their past - further penalizing people who have served their sentence already and have rejoined society.

The basic formula for anyone released from incarceration includes two key pieces to deterring recidivism - 1) find a job and 2) find a place to live. The way this ordinance is written - specifically that the expiration of background check eligibility would take place from someone's sentencing date - not from their release date - is such a significant and important part of the legislation because of the concept of "time served". If we deny people the opportunity to find housing - even after they've served their sentence - we're simply creating conditions by which that person can't sustain themselves and mostly likely contributing to conditions that could see them fail in their rehabilitation and re-entry into society.

I hope that you see the nature of these elements of the ordinance as what they are - protections for equity and a way to make sure that everyone in Saint Paul has an opportunity to succeed.

Thank you. I hope to see you vote in favor of the ordinance. It's vitally important to keep fighting for economic and social justice in the City of Saint Paul.

Sincerely,
Robert Wales
1727 Race St
Saint Paul, MN 55116

Hello Council,

My name is Kevin and I live in Ward 3. I am in favor of the tenant protections ordinance and write to urge you to vote for this ordinance.

Renters are typically younger, lower-income, and more likely to be people of color. These groups are disproportionately affected by discrimination on a personal and city level, and deserve the full protection and backing of the city of Saint Paul. These protections will not only positively impact the most vulnerable groups but also the majority of Saint Paul residents.

Pass tenant protections now!

Best,
Kevin L. Vargas
1034 Cleveland Ave S #206,
St Paul, MN 55116

Saint Paul City Council,

I'm writing this letter to urge support for the proposed tenant protections, outlined in ordinance 20-14. These tenant protections ensure basic levels of protection for tenants, both when being considered for housing, and while living in a rental unit.

We need to find ways to ensure people are fairly considered for housing to live in, and that people aren't made homeless or housing-insecure because of circumstances outside of their control. These protections are a step towards ensuring those things.

Again, I urge support for ordinance 20-14.

Thanks,

Jeb Rach
Hamline-Midway neighborhood, St. Paul

Good evening council members,

I'm writing to you tonight to express my strong support for Tenant Protections ordinance 20-14. I'm a current resident of Ward 1 and am fortunate enough now to own our home, but not so long ago I rented in various city wards for close to a decade. Many of my neighbors now are renters. Tenants are at least as much a part of the fabric of this city as homeowners, yet our policy often seems to fixate on the latter and ignore the former. This ordinance is a good step away from that myopia.

The protections proposed by 20-14 are common-sense, well-balanced proposals. In my opinion they don't go far enough, but they are an excellent start. They provide key protections to ensure stable housing in a tight rental market squeezed further by a period of domestic crisis. Stable housing is key to quality of life, and it should not be denied or hindered simply because someone is among the millions of Americans who can't afford to purchase a home outright. If we truly believe in being a livable city, stable housing is essential; these protections help support that stability in a small but meaningful way.

Nor are these protections for tenants unduly burdensome on landlords. Many smaller owners already informally follow guidelines for notification of sale and eviction only for clear cause. Enshrining these practices in law simply provides increased transparency, honesty, and protection against the few predatory owners who want to squeeze profit out of the less fortunate, or who simply don't care. In short, folks, this is a slam dunk.

I could go on for a while about how we're doing nowhere near enough to encourage the development of truly affordable housing, or how zoning so often favors a vocal minority of owners who care more for their property values than their community, but I think I'll close there. Please support 20-14, please support our neighbors, not just in word but in deed.

Thank you,
Eric Kohs

787 Marshall Ave

Hi Councilor Jalali,

Thank you so much for all of your hard work on behalf of renters in Saint Paul. I'm so happy to see you continue to stress the urgent need for the tenant protections ordinance. As a Saint Paul renter and as someone who believes safe, affordable, and stable housing is a human right, I support ordinance 20-14.

Thanks,

Rachel Lochner
1855 Iglehart Ave
Saint Paul, MN 55104

Good evening,

I'm writing as a Ward 4 renter in support of the five proposed tenant protection ordinances. I believe these policies are a critical step in addressing the housing crisis affecting current and future residents of Saint Paul and in realizing the goals of the Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan, which calls for providing stable rental housing using the following approaches:

- **Policy H-26.** Increase awareness around tenant and landlord rights, responsibilities, best practices and resources to increase access to rental units and decrease conflicts that could lead to evictions.
- **Policy H-28.** Advocate for research on and best practices for tenant screening criteria, such as credit, criminal and rental history reviews, to reduce housing insecurity for those with low credit scores, past evictions or criminal convictions.
- **Policy H-29.** Support efforts and/or legislation to discourage renter displacement due to a change in ownership that increases rents and/or eliminates acceptance of Section 8 vouchers.
- **Policy H-30.** Support efforts to reduce non-just-cause evictions.

The proposed protections would advance the stated goal of stable rental housing by working to reduce evictions, make housing more readily available to all residents, and promote residential stability. I hope that you will support each of these measures and help make Saint Paul a more equitable city.

Thank you,

Alicia Valenti (she/her)

Councilmember Noecker:

I am an owner-occupant of a triplex in Ward 2. With regard to the proposed Tenants Protections ordinance, I have two brief comments; one general and one specific.

Specific: The provision that disallows landlords refusing tenancy based on criminal and/or credit history is unfair on its face unless the provision is expanded to include the hiring practices of all businesses. It is absurd to force landlords to rent to a person businesses won't hire. It is unjust and unequal under the law to put the onus of mitigating the failures of society on a single small group. Extend this provision to all business and I will support it.

General: I don't think our economic system is capable of dealing with big social problems such as affordable housing. The fact we have been discussing and debating healthcare for at least a generation supports this. Since it is unlikely St. Paul will initiate fundamental changes in our political economy, a reasonable step to address affordable housing is to require business to pay all workers a living wage. Short of that, business is benefiting from the social welfare programs financed by taxpayers that support their poorly paid employees. Too often in our business oriented society profits are privatized while costs are socialized.

Your website says you are interested in justice issues. Well, these are two issues waiting, and begging, for a champion.

Steven Boyer

May 27, 2020

Dear City Council Members:

We own two rental properties in St. Paul, one on Sherburne Avenue and one on West 7th Street.

We keep our rents extremely low – \$695 – \$850 for Sherburne and \$510 - \$650 for West 7th. We keep our rents low because we have witnessed how little the City of St. Paul has done to provide affordable housing.

Indeed, we live close to the high-end apartments on Selby and Snelling, where efficiencies start at \$995.

Because we have low rents, all sorts of people want to rent from us. Our buildings are a mixture of African American, African immigrant, Southeast Asian and White.

Our philosophy is simple: WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAFETY OF THE 30+ INDIVIDUALS WE RENT TO.

That means we MUST keep our buildings safe and free from hazards and that includes bad tenants. Trust us; we have had to deal with BAD tenants: These include crack addicts, methamphetamine addicts, felons, tenants who have broken into other tenants apartments.

We have had to file evictions on all these people

Our question for the City Council is, if you force us to rent to individuals who have felonies, if you put severe restrictions on evictions will you also take the phone calls from our tenants who are upset and crying because they have felt threatened or their children have felt threatened by tenants who are

breaking into apartments, doing dope, lying in a hallway in a stoned-out stupor? Will you cover the loss of rent we have when the good tenants move out because they feel threatened?

Better yet, why don't you, as council members, invite these people who threaten others, to live in your home or your apartment with you?

What we did to solve our problem with tenants who threaten other tenants, use drugs, break into apartments, etc. is very simple: WE DO NOT RENT TO THESE PEOPLE. We do this by using a professional screening firm that does in-depth background checks! If we have a problem tenant, we EVICT THE BAD TENANT!

And do you know why we do this? That is also very simple: BECAUSE THE OTHER TENANTS IN THE BUILDING DEMAND IT! As noted, we rent to individuals from many ethnicities and cultural backgrounds. They are low to moderate income. Two-thirds of those individuals have lived in our buildings 5 years or more. Some of our tenants have been in the buildings for 15 to 20 years – they consider the buildings their HOMES!

Please understand, no landlord likes to evict tenants. No one wants an individual to be homeless. Additionally, evictions are expensive to landlords. Tenants leave apartments with doors ripped off cabinets, carpeting stained and ripped, refrigerator doors missing (yes, that happens), mice, roaches, bedbugs, 3-months or more of garbage rotting on kitchen floors. One tenant we evicted had hundreds of violent pornographic videos and magazines strewn across his living room floor, three inches deep.

If you have any consideration for low-income and moderate-income individuals who want SAFE AFFORDABLE HOUSING then do NOT pass the tenant protection ordinance: it DOES NOT PROTECT TENANTS!!!! Make it possible for landlords to keep their buildings SAFE FOR ALL TENANTS by allowing landlords to do in-depth background checks, use those background checks to rent to qualified individuals, and to evict troublesome tenants!

If we are restricted on who we can rent to and who we can evict, please tell us what we can say to tenants when we are no longer able to provide them with safe housing. Because they deserve better.

Jeanne and Sue Rohland,
1562 Hague Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55104

Dear Council Member Thao,

My name is Cece Watkins and I'm a Frogtown homeowner. I am a constituent of your Ward and a leader in ISIAAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please support the just cause notice of the tenant protections ordinance.

A just cause notice helps tenants have the opportunity to stay in their housing if they are fulfilling all of the legal requirements to do so, without experiencing arbitrary or baseless termination. Right now, a tenant can be forced to leave within 30 days without any idea of why it happened, which creates even greater instability and widens structural inequities for those of color and low-income. In a time of economic hardship, we should make sure we put strong protections for tenants and ensure we don't have a greater homelessness crisis in Saint Paul.

A just cause notice is common sense and ensures transparency and fairness. Let's actually do right by tenants and support this important part of the tenant's ordinance. Thank you for your support.
Cece Watkins

HANBERY & TURNER, P.A.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

DONNA E. HANBERY
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33 SOUTH SIXTH STREET, SUITE 4160
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WRITER'S DIRECT DIAL NUMBER

May 28, 2020

COMMENTS ON "TENANT PROTECTION" PROPOSALS

Saint Paul City Council
15 Kellogg Boulevard West
310 City Hall
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Mayor Melvin Carter
15 Kellogg Boulevard West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

I am writing to voice opposition to the St. Paul proposed "Tenant Protection Ordinance." The ordinance will not protect tenants, but will contribute to making St. Paul one of the worst places to own rental property and to be a lease abiding renter.

Specifically, the "just cause" requirement before a lease could be terminated will be a significant expense and risk to owning rental property. It is also completely unnecessary.

Do you have any idea how many laws already exist in Minnesota to protect tenants?

There are multiple statutes in Minnesota's landlord tenant chapter that protects tenants from retaliation if a landlord gives a notice to quit "without cause," non-renews a lease without cause, and even when a landlord files an eviction for breach of lease or "just cause." If the landlord's motivation is to retaliate against a tenant's assertion of a legal right, a request for repair or service, or complaint of a violation of the lease or landlord tenant law, the tenant has a defense.

Statutes that specifically protect tenants against retaliation include Minnesota Statutes Sections 504B.285; §504B.441; §504B.205.

In addition to statutes that generally prohibit retaliation against tenants that assert rights, tenants are protected against termination of a lease for a "retaliatory reason" under Minnesota common law (Central Housing Assoc. v Olson). This common law right gives tenants a defense to an eviction action, including evictions for breach of lease, even without a formal complaint by the tenant of some alleged dissatisfaction or grievance against the landlord. Protections are also in the federal Fair Housing Act and the Minnesota Human Rights Act that prohibits reprisal/retaliation for a human rights or discrimination complaint.

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Property owners and managers that choose to participate in subsidized housing programs or the low income housing tax credit program (LIHTC), (and get the government benefits of their programs) are also subject to a requirement that limits lease terminations for good cause.

There is simply no need for this council to take away a property owner's right to have a lease agreement with a tenant that seeks to require a positive, ongoing business relationship. The historic real property rights to own or control real property, and your business relationship with your tenants, and the value of those rights, will be irreparably harmed by this unneeded proposal.

The ordinance goes further than what is required in project-based HUD subsidized properties or LIHTC properties by giving tenants a right "to cure." Is the first murder or assault committed on a rental property "free"? How do you cure defaults like threatening neighbors, selling or using unlawful drugs, or causing substantial damage to the rental premises?

There is a good reason that the automobile insurance laws and divorce laws switched to a "no fault standard" years ago. It is very expensive and time consuming to "prove fault." The St. Paul just cause requirement will turn what should be a simple notice of non-renewal of lease, when a tenant has been an ongoing source of problems, like noise complaints, unauthorized guests, propping open doors, smoking at a no-smoking property, etc., into a costly legal battle for the owner. It may also stigmatize tenants that are terminated from St. Paul properties. Other landlords may reasonably assume "you must have done something wrong" if you are terminated from a lease in St. Paul.

I have been representing property owners and managers in the state of Minnesota for over 40 years. Years ago I was hired by the St. Paul Police Department Force Unit to do mandatory license training for landlords with rental license issues on matters that included resident screening and lease enforcement. A landlord can have the best lease in the world, and even tight screening, but there will still be problems with some tenants. One of the most straightforward ways to get rid of a problem tenant has been to non-renew the lease with proper written notice before the end of the lease term.

This proposal will diminish the rights and safety of residents that want to bring complaints to management's attention about other tenants, or their guests, concerning noise, unauthorized occupants or visitors, suspected unlawful conduct, prohibited smoking, or other lease violations by neighbors. The need to prove cause, will require landlords to put complaining neighbors on the spot to "bear witness" against their fellow tenants and to "get involved" in spite of fears a neighbor might reasonably have of retaliation, or reprisal as the legal process to build enough evidence to "show cause," a warning and chance to cure to the impacted tenant, and to eventually go to court takes weeks or months to complete. Tenants that expect management companies to "do their jobs" and to enforce the lease, will find that the city of St. Paul requires them to be in the spotlight and on the witness stand. The desire to remain anonymous or to "not get involved" will not be a choice.

Even as I write this letter, I am working on notice letters for multiple clients where residents in their buildings, cooped up with COVID-19 restrictions, are expressing frustration that some of their

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neighbors have a revolving door of unwanted guests or overnight visitors, in violation of the Governor's order, and may be putting the building at risk. Similarly, residents are complaining about noise, disturbances, and unauthorized smoking at smoke free sites from other residents in the building. At the moment, some residents understand that evictions are prohibited under the Governor's peacetime order. In the future, my St. Paul clients may need to tell residents in St. Paul properties that this council has put them all on the witness seat. If they want a problem tenant to go away, it will be their word against that tenant's word in a potentially contested and drawn out legal process.

In addition to the legal costs this law will impose to prove an eviction case, it will add a layer of uncertainty to when an apartment can be shown and re-rented. With the shortage of housing, and the low margins of many buildings, most owners try to accomplish 24 hour turns where one tenant leaves and another tenant moves into the building. With the uncertainty of a potential court case and "for cause" eviction hearing, apartments may be vacant longer as landlords wait to market the apartment until after parties go to court, and a decision is reached, and a writ may be served. The higher cost of vacancies will push up rents for other tenants.

The just cause requirement is not needed. It is bad policy. It will allow problem tenants to harass and disturb neighbors. Owners will no longer be able to terminate a tenancy in an expedient and cost effective manner by giving proper notice when the lease ends. The additional costs will inevitably be passed on to other residents. Landlords, particularly small owners, will face significant legal disadvantages. Most owners in housing court are required to hire lawyers. They are not able to represent themselves unless they are individuals. Tenants disproportionately qualify for free legal advice. Even tenants that do not qualify for Legal Aid may have a volunteer lawyer that can make the owner's cost for an eviction hearing cost thousands of dollars.

I am not a constitutional lawyer, but this certainly appears on its face to be a serious "taking" of private property rights without just compensation for the residential landlords in the city of St. Paul.

COMMENTS ON SCREENING

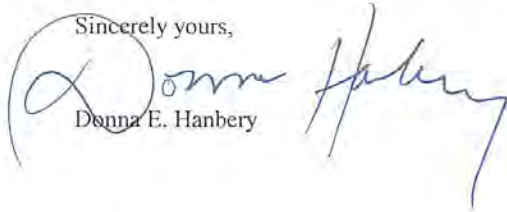
I used to be the city's "expert" to assist landlords in adopting screening to promote well-run buildings, to advance Crime Free/Drug Free rental policies, and to promote the interests of the city's home owners that wanted residential landlords to be good neighborhood citizens. The limits this council wants to put on the right of a landlord to screen and select residents, will not promote those objectives. If you want to have more affordable housing, let landlords run their properties in a way that reduces the risks of tenants that will not succeed and be lease compliant, and minimizes operating costs. The screening criteria proposed, will not advance those goals and will, inevitably, lead some affordable owners to leave the city. It will lead to greater bad debt and vacancy losses and higher operating costs. Further, it makes no sense for St. Paul to adopt a completely different, and more limited, set of screening criteria than what has been adopted and will be taking effect in Minneapolis in June 2020. Why not see how well the Minneapolis ordinance works before deciding

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to tell landlords how to run their business? Why propose St. Paul distinct criteria? How much confusion do consumers need when applying for rental properties in Minneapolis or St. Paul? It certainly adds another layer of cost, complexity, and another reason for any owner having second thoughts about becoming a landlord to get out of the rental housing business in the city of St. Paul.

I have been blessed to work with many of the Minnesota-based developers and owners of residential rental property. Many of these buildings are what is considered naturally occurring affordable housing properties in that have been operated by the same ownership and management families for generations. They are well run properties with good business practices in terms of screening, leasing, and taking steps to ask tenants that cause problems, for the building, their neighbors, and the community, to leave when their lease ends. Good residential landlord citizens do not deserve this ill-conceived, unnecessary burdens on their business.

Sincerely yours,



Donna E. Hanbery

Hello Kirstin,

I attended the Macalester Groveland Community Council Housing and Land Use committee meeting last night. I appreciated the opportunity to speak with you since you had such a large role in drafting this ordinance. There was one question I asked which you said you would need more detail on in order to answer fully. Here is more detail and you can reach me by phone or email with further questions. I'm including my Council member, Chris Tolbert, in this email as I've already been in touch with him about my position on this ordinance, but this is information I had not previously shared with him.

A little over 2 years ago a guest of a tenant made threats of physical violence against me. I eventually got a restraining order effective for 2 years which expired as of 3/21/2020. When I look up the case number in the MN Courts record system it does not show.

Thankfully since then he has not made any attempts to contact me. However, if this person were to now apply for an apartment in my building what option would I have to deny them based on my personal experience? From my reading of this ordinance I would be forced to rent to my harasser so long as he met all the screening criteria laid out. Does that seem right to you?

What if I rent to an applicant and through chance they committed harassment in the past against another current tenant? The victim of that abuse would be allowed under state law to terminate their lease immediately, <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/504B.206#stat.504B.206.1>, and I would be stuck with the former abuser as a tenant with no option to terminate their lease until they violated it. There would be nothing to stop the victim from telling all their neighbors who and what that person did. Without this ordinance I could reassure any concerned neighbors by saying, "evicting him now would be very difficult, but the lease is up soon and we will not renew it." With this ordinance my response will have to be "my hands are tied until he does something wrong."

Another question I have is related to a comment you made about mobile home parks. You said that Just Cause language exists as it relates to these types of leases. Was the Just Cause section of this ordinance based on that law? Can you please direct me to that information so I can do my own research?

Lastly, there were multiple times last night where you started a sentence with "the intent of the language is..." specifically related to security deposits and pre-paid rent limitations.

For example from Section 193.03;

"(b) Pre-paid rent limitation. **No landlord shall demand, charge, accept, or retain from a tenant pre-paid rent an amount that exceeds the equivalent of one month's rent.** This provision should not be read to prohibit a landlord from demanding, charging, accepting, or retaining a security deposit, pet deposit, or application fees, pursuant to Sec. 54.03 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code."

Pre-paid rent is not defined anywhere in this ordinance. The fact that this is in a section titled "Security Deposits" does not change the definition of 'rent' to mean only that rent which is collected before move-in. As written this applies to all rent that is paid before the rental period in which it is for. Also, as was commented many times last night this precludes a landlord from accepting more than one month of rent even when the tenant wishes to do so. If I were to accept a lump-sum payment of multiple months rent from a tenant even with their permission to do so I would be in violation of this ordinance and subject to "criminal prosecution, and/or administrative fines and restrictions." Some tenants prefer paying this way and for others it's the perfect way to prove to a landlord of their ability to pay if their credit history isn't positive. Now that option is no longer on the table.

Based on the votes the MGCC board had on the changes to the language it was almost evenly split on interpretation (the first vote was 9 to 8). Ensuring that the language reflects the intention of stakeholder involvement is a key part of this process. As it is currently written I do not feel that this language accurately reflects all stakeholders and is easily interpreted contrary to the intent. I truly believe that with better stakeholder involvement we can craft an ordinance that works for everybody.

Thank you,

Jeffrey R Arnold
Lakewood Enterprises, Inc.

Dear Council Member Noecker,

Noreen & Tim Farrell at 552 Summit Avenue are homeowners in Ward 2 and of course your constituents and supporters . We are leaders in ISAIAH and strongly support the **proposed tenant protections ordinance** for St. Paul . We respectfully ask that you support the just cause notice of the tenant protections ordinance.

As you redoubtably understand, a just cause notice helps tenants have the opportunity to stay in their housing if they are fulfilling all of the legal requirements to do so, without experiencing arbitrary or baseless termination. Right now, a tenant can be forced to leave within 30 days without any idea of why it happened, which creates even greater instability and widens structural inequities for those of color and low-income. In a time of economic hardship, we should make sure we put strong protections for tenants and ensure we don't have a greater homelessness crisis in Saint Paul.

We believe a just cause notice is an economically and morally common sense policy. It will ensure transparency and fairness especially in these unprecedented times. Let's actually do right by tenants and support this important part of the tenant's ordinance.

Thanks for your support,
Noreen & Tim Farrell

F. M. (Tim) Farrell
Saint Paul, MN 55102

I fully support the tenant protections in proposed ordinance 20-14. We are not going to make any progress on any of the overwhelming challenges we are facing until everyone has safe and secure housing. That's where it starts.

Mark Thieroff
1438 Chelmsford St.

Hello, I live on Linwood and Victoria. I am a member of ISAIAH and am asking you to support the tenants rights ordinance including the just cause provision.
Thank you, Judy Parr

Dear Council Member Dai Thao,

My name is Pastor Jen Rome of Pilgrim Lutheran Church in St. Paul (55105), and I'm a resident of St. Paul (55104). I am a constituent of your Ward and leader in ISAIAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please support the just cause notice of the tenant protections ordinance.

A just cause notice helps tenants have the opportunity to stay in their housing if they are fulfilling all of the legal requirements to do so, without experiencing arbitrary or baseless termination. Right now, a tenant can be forced to leave within 30 days without any idea of why it happened, which creates even greater instability and widens structural inequities for those of color and low-income. In a time of economic hardship, we should make sure we put strong protections for tenants and ensure we don't have a greater homelessness crisis in Saint Paul.

A just cause notice is common sense and ensures transparency and fairness. Let's actually do right by tenants and support this important part of the tenant's ordinance. Thank you for your support.

Jen Rome

Dear Council Member Thao,

My name is Denise Stahura and I'm a resident in Ward One and participant with ISIAAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please support the just cause notice of the tenant protections ordinance.

A just cause notice helps tenants have the opportunity to stay in their housing if they are fulfilling all of the legal requirements to do so, without experiencing arbitrary or baseless termination. Right now, a tenant can be forced to leave within 30 days without understanding the rationale which creates instability and widens structural inequities for those of color and those living on low incomes. In a time of economic hardship and civil unrest, we need protections for tenants to ensure we don't create an even greater homelessness crisis in Saint Paul.

A just cause notice is common sense and ensures transparency and fairness. Let's do right by tenants and support this important part of the tenant's ordinance.

Thank you for listening.

Denise Stahura

To whom it may concern,

I am an owner of apartment buildings in St. Paul near the Cathedral, Merriam Park and Highland Park.

I have worked all my life (presently age 76) to purchase buildings that are in dire need of repair and clean up. I do many little things like having 2 planters in front of every building with flower pots changed 4 times per year, take paint off the wood work applied by previously sloppy owners, landscape the exterior much better than most of the surrounding homes, etc. I do this and do not charge anymore rent than my neighbor who does not do the same.

We want to create a community that people are proud to call home and the neighbors are glad we own the building next to them. Helps beautify the neighborhood!

Your latest proposals as to rent screening, back ground checks, etc will change all this for us and other small property owners. My properties will be sold to either large outside interests or owners that will not be concerned about the appearance and maintenance of these buildings. It will have UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES. What you sow you will reap.

You are taking your problem and making it ours. Mark my words you have no idea how these proposals if implemented will have far FAR GREATER consequences than the problems you solve.

I have one last question. Would you want your 20 year old daughter to live in one of our buildings , if in the same building same floor a convicted felon (murder, rape , armed robbery) that had just gotten out of prison after serving 7-8 years was living there? Thank you.

S. T.

Dear Council Member, Dai Thao,

My name is Rochelle Thomsen and I'm a resident of Saint Paul. I am a constituent of your Ward and leader in ISIAAH. I strongly support the proposed tenant protections ordinance for St. Paul and ask that you please support the just cause notice of the tenant protections ordinance.

A just cause notice helps tenants have the opportunity to stay in their housing if they are fulfilling all of the legal requirements to do so, without experiencing arbitrary or baseless termination. Right now, a tenant can be forced to leave within 30 days without any idea of why it happened, which creates even greater instability and widens structural inequities for those of color and low-income. In a time of economic hardship, we should make sure we put strong protections for tenants and ensure we don't have a greater homelessness crisis in Saint Paul.

A just cause notice is common sense and ensures transparency and fairness. Let's actually do right by tenants and support this important part of the tenant's ordinance. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Rochelle Thomsen

Hello Councilmember Thao,

My name is Emma Seeley and I am a renter in the Summit-University neighborhood. I am a huge supporter of the proposed tenant protections, and ask that you vote yes on the ordinance. Renters deserve basic human dignity and equal protection under the law. More than half of St. Paul residents are renters. This ordinance would benefit the majority of our city residents. Currently, landlords can simply not renew a tenant's lease for no reason, displacing tenants when they have done nothing wrong. This leaves renters vulnerable to retaliation when they try to assert their right to a safe, healthy, and dignified place to call home. This causes housing stability for so many households, which is why just cause is so important.

There is no limit to what a landlord can charge for security deposits, which creates a barrier for households who earn steady (but low) incomes and are unable to save. It punishes those who are living month-to-month, which is a common occurrence considering 59% of American households live paycheck to paycheck. We need a limit on security deposits.

Right now, countless renters are barred from housing because of discriminatory screening practices that further harm communities of color who have suffered disparate policing and incarceration, as well as economic marginalization (redlining, predatory lending, to name a few).

Our renter community increasingly faces challenges to staying here — because of the rising costs of rent, our citywide affordable housing shortage, stagnant wages, and persistent forms of discrimination that have no place in our city. Tenant protections are critical to helping reduce barriers to housing access and

Being a renter is a very uneasy position to be in. Earlier this year my apartment was flooded due to a burst pipe in the unit above me. This left my bedroom and kitchen unusable. My landlord provided no alternative living for two weeks and this was only due to me calling multiple times and complaining. I still had to pay rent for these two weeks even though I was unable to live in half of my apartment. They had me stay in another property for three weeks and then proceeded to kick me out because they

hadn't removed the unit from Airbnb and it was rented out by another person. They refused to pay my renter's insurance deductible that would allow me to stay in a hotel for as long as it took to repair. I had to find a friend to live with for another three weeks. My unit wasn't fixed for 46 nights. This caused an immeasurable amount of stress and there was nothing I could do. No protections or laws I could cite to change the situation. If I wasn't in a privileged position that allowed me to complain over and over again I think the situation could have been even worse.

Please do the right thing and protect thousands in your ward from further injustice.

Thank you,

Emma Seeley