

**From:** [Joe Nathan](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Khalique Rogers](#); [Saura Jost](#); [Tom Basgen](#)  
**Subject:** 1 page Testimony on rent stabilization ordinance from Dr. Joe Nathan, 40+ year resident/home owner, former renter in St Paul  
**Date:** Friday, April 18, 2025 1:38:34 PM  
**Attachments:** [Rent Stabilization Testimony - Joe Nathan, PhD .docx](#)

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Please see and please consider attached one page testimony with a suggestion for possible next steps.

Thank you

Joe Nathan

## Testimony from Joe Nathan, 40 year St Paul Resident, Founder and Retired Director of Center for School Change

### Brief background

1. The National Governors Association selected me to direct a major national research project; governors and legislators in 31 states inviting me to present research-based testimony.
2. I have personal experience of being a renter with a landlord who was not easy to work with and did not a great job of maintaining an apartment I shared with several friends.
3. For more than 40 years, I have been a homeowner in St Paul
4. For more than a decade I've worked on the issue of increasing the supply of deeply affordable housing – our organization helped convince the Mn legislature to
  - a. Allocate more than \$20 million/year for 6 years to help increase the supply of deeply affordable housing
  - b. Allocate millions of dollars to help create or expand programs in which high school students learn construction skills as they build housing for low/moderate income people. Two examples with 10 minutes of City Hall– [GAP](#) and [Housing for Vets](#)

### Relevant Research about impact of rent control:

1. National Bureau of Economic Research – “[Robbing Peter to Pay Paul](#) 2 central conclusions (Associate & Assoc Prof, USC) Jan 2018-Jan 2022 (NBER is a highly respected non-partisan group) The conclusions of this paper that focused on St Paul's experience with rent control:
  - a. [Rent control caused property values to decline for a total of \\$1.6 billion](#)
  - b. The tenants who gained the most from rent control had higher incomes and were more likely to be white, while the owners who lost the most had lower incomes and were more likely to be minorities...to the extent that rent control is intended to transfer wealth from high-income to low-income households, **the realized impact of the law was the opposite of its intention.**
2. Bill Lindeke is a lecturer in Urban Studies at the University of Minnesota's Department of Geography, Environment and Society. He [wrote in a MinnPost article](#), January, 2025. Most developers will tell you that rent control is a fiscal red flag, and a significant percentage of investors will simply not deal with cities where rent stabilization is a possibility.” He studied 60 comparable cities and found that St Paul's decline in housing ranked 7<sup>th</sup> worst. [He urged repealing St Paul's rent control/stabilization ordinance.](#)

CONCLUSION: **This amendment be adopted** But that is NOT enough

- Create task force to explore other ways to expand supply of low/moderate housing – include housing AND support low income renters. Zoom call with the NBER authors.
- Explore ways to support local landlords who own “naturally occurring” moderate income older apartments who are being challenged by the current ordinance
- Approve ordinances that help protect responsible renters  
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