

HB 2736 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Housing

Prepared By: Claire Adamsick, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 3/18, 4/1

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires, at time of rental agreement, landlord to provide tenant an informational notice describing: tenants' rights regarding discrimination, including harassment, under state and federal law; methods that tenants may use to file a discrimination complaint; and legal and support resources available to a tenant that is a victim of discrimination or harassment. Requires the Bureau of Labor and Industries to produce initial informational notice in plain language no later than November 15, 2021. Requires landlord to provide informational notice to all new tenancies beginning on or after January 1, 2022, and provide notice to all tenancies in existence on January 1, 2022, no later than February 1, 2022. Allows bureau to assess fine, not to exceed \$1,000, against a landlord who does not provide tenant notice in accordance with timelines established by this Act. Declares emergency, effective upon passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Housing provider responsibility in providing easy-to-read information for tenants regarding their rights
- Specific support and protections for sexual violence survivors under state and federal fair housing laws
- Bureau of Labor and Industry agency role in enforcing state housing discrimination laws
- Consideration of imposing a fine or other accountability mechanism for landlords who do not meet new requirements on a voluntary basis

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Allows Bureau of Labor and Industries to amend informational notice after initial publication. Removes requirement in original measure that informational notice include legal and support resources for a tenant who is a victim of discrimination or harassment. Removes provision in original measure that bureau may assess a fine against a landlord who fails to provide tenant with notice in a timely manner. Requires landlord of a building with 11 or more residential dwelling units to post a copy of the informational notice in a common area of the building.

BACKGROUND:

The Federal Fair Housing Act (1968) prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of dwellings, and in other housing-related transactions, based on a person's race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or physical or mental disability. It prohibits housing providers from discriminating against any person in the provision of services and facilities of a rental or dwelling.

House Bill 2736 requires a landlord to provide a tenant with an informational notice describing a tenant's rights regarding discrimination and harassment under state and federal law. It requires the Bureau of Labor and Industries to develop the initial informational notice by November 15, 2021, and it allows the bureau to impose a fine against a landlord who does not provide the informational notice to a tenant in a timely manner.