

Submitter: Betty Holladay

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB799

Good morning Senator Jama, Vice Chair Anderson, and other members of the committee.

My name is Betty Holladay. I am on the Policy Committee of the Community Alliance of Tenants. As a law student in the 1990s, I represented a few indigent clients in landlord / tenant matters. I am speaking in favor of SB 799.

A couple of months ago, I got a frantic text from a friend who explained that her daughter was due in eviction court on a Monday. The daughter had engaged in self-help measures by withholding a rent payment after she was double-charged over several months for her utilities. This renter had 72 hours to get an attorney to fight her eviction. I don't know how she did it but she found one - over a weekend. When she appeared in court, luckily the case was continued due to legal errors on the part of the non-represented landlady.

72 hours is generally not enough time to obtain legal counsel or to put together a case. And it is certainly not enough time to replace absent rent monies when a medical emergency arises, a sudden job loss occurs, a roommate leaves, or your employer fails to pay you on time. Pandemic protections are gone. Evictions are increasing.

SB 799 adds tenant protections to the law. It lengthens the eviction period, delays evictions pending receipt of rental assistance, and ends the heinous practice of allowing a landlord to refuse payment once an eviction notice is issued.

The law protects both landlords and tenants, but it is still somewhat skewed towards landlords. All SB 799 does is to level the playing field. I encourage its passage.

Betty Holladay