

Submitter: Karen McCoy

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3054

The state of our economy is not the only measure of health that is important in the United States. It certainly is on a lot of people's minds given this last election. One factor that certainly supports a healthy economy is housing affordability. Housing affordability can be used as a symbol of financial stability, psychological safety, and physical health given the significant issue of homelessness and the impact that even the fear of homelessness has on elders, vulnerable populations and families. There are studies and reputable perspectives that support this.

<https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2023/08/22/how-housing-costs-drive-levels-of-homelessness>

<https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/blog/housing-americas-older-adults-four-problems-we-must-address>

<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/em/spring-summer-23/highlight2.html>

<https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/blog/record-homelessness-amid-ongoing-affordability-crisis>

<https://www.habitat.org/costofhome/housing-affordability-and-families>

<https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/calendar/older-adults-pathways-and-out-housing-insecurity-and-homelessness>

Notwithstanding the resources for those in need, our society has long favored those with access to resources than those without. You may loosely infer from that statement and what I have written so far that I wish our society had other means than the economy by which to measure and support the health and well-being of our citizens and environment, but it has some utility here. Since so many big businesses do not necessarily consider the ramifications of their business decisions on the general economic welfare and wellbeing of the community they work in, then it seems beneficial to have government step in and regulate their operations in order to protect citizens.

Please lower annual rental increases (businesses get enough money from the number of units), cap rental increases upon selling a home (favor the citizen-seller who is selling in tough economic conditions), prevent demands for aesthetic improvements (this is between the buyer and seller of a home) and interior inspection requirements (this is also between the buyer and seller of a home). When we care for those who need affordable housing, we are essentially caring for everyone.

Someone's father, sister, son, friend may need affordable housing. Someone's mother, brother, daughter, friend may need to support a family member who has affordable housing or is trying to gain affordable housing or is trying to sell the house

their relative lived in. Who wants to hear that their aging and ill parent is living in fear that their spouse will suffer homelessness when they die even if that will not happen (as much as anyone can reasonably predict the future)? Today's societal messages and manufactured park and other rental management behaviors enter the collective psyche. The reality is, though, since there is not enough affordable housing, where are people going to go? I have seen these issues and concerns in the lives of my family members, neighbors and the clients I've served.

- Karen McCoy, LPC