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## **INDIANA GENERAL ASSEMBLY POISED TO LEAVE HOOSIER RENTERS OUT IN THE COLD**

INDIANAPOLIS, IN – This week, the Indiana General Assembly will be taking action on several housing bills impacting landlord-tenant laws. The bills overwhelmingly support landlord rights leaving Hoosier renters out in the cold. As early as today, the Indiana House may vote on an override of SEA 148, which takes all local control of the landlord-tenant relationship away from Hoosier cities. [Like in previous years](#), the Indiana General Assembly appears only willing to pass substantial legislation if it favors the ever demanding housing industry.

Several landlord friendly bills were introduced this session and several have pending action (in bold).

- HB 1036 (Negele): Housing Tax Credits. No hearing.
- HB 1173 (Klinker): Tax Exemption for Landlord of a Nonprofit Renter. No hearing.
- **HB 1110 (Bartels): Small Claims Court Procedures. Pending House Second Reading.**
- **HB 1114 (Miller): Residential Building Design Elements. Committee hearing held, pending committee vote.**
- HB 1435 (Carbaugh): Small Claims Court Jurisdictional Limits. No hearing.
- HB 1461 (Borders): Abandoned Property in a Rented Dwelling. No hearing.
- **HB 1541 (Manning): Landlord-Tenant Relations. Housing Judiciary Committee hearing scheduled for Tuesday. Similar to SEA 148.**
- **SB 8 (Buchanan): Traffic Enforcement in Residential Complexes on Property Governed by Home Owners Associations. Passed the Senate.**
- SB 127 (Bohacek): Use of Property as Short Term Rental. No hearing.
- SB 149 (Bray): Health Code Violations. No hearing.
- **SB 150 (Bray/Buck): Housing Matters. Trailer bill for SEA 148. Passed Senate Local Government. Pending Senate floor vote.**
- SB 155 (Bray): Removal of Tenant's Property. No hearing.
- **SB 158 (Bohacek): Ordinance Violations. In original form would have reduced fines allowable against bad acting landlords. Amended in committee. Pending Senate floor vote.**
- SB 172 (Randolph): Housing Authority Commissioner Compensation. No hearing.
- **SB 214 (Holdman): Low Income Housing. Pending Senate Second Reading.**

In contrast, several tenant friendly bills were introduced this session. Unfortunately, few have had hearings and the bills with hearings will have minimal impact or may be amended. Tenant friendly bills with pending action (in bold):

- HB 1063 (Aylesworth): Renter's Tax Deduction for Disabled Veterans.
- HB 1089 (Harris Jr.): Student Hunger and Homelessness.
- HB 1094 (Moed): Rental Agreements.
- HB 1143 (Moed): Requests for Law Enforcement at Rental Properties.
- HB 1219 (Clere): Various Housing Matters.
- HB 1332 (Gore): Unlawful Sale of Unsafe Buildings.
- HB 1415 (Porter): Bed Bug Control.
- HB 1492 (Moed): Required Notices to Mobile Home Communities.
- HB 1530 (Errington): Housing Stability Task Force and Eviction Data.
- HB 1559 (Mayfield): Data Base of Potentially Contaminated Properties.
- SB 18 (Glick): Disabled Veteran Renter's Deduction.
- **SB 116 (Taylor/Tallian): Landlord Tenant Settlement Conference Program. Pending action in Senate Judiciary. Appears likely to be amended to meet concerns of housing industry that will change impact of bill.**
- SB 119 (Lanane): Prohibited Discrimination in Civil Rights Statutes.
- **SB 218 (Sandlin): Township Homeless Assistance. Pending Senate Second Reading.**
- SB 258 (Niezgodski): Rental Assistance. Was scheduled for hearing but withdrawn.
- SB 270 (Melton): Residential Landlord-Tenant Matters.
- SB 282 (Qaddoura): Rent, Utilities, and Mortgage Assistance. Was scheduled for hearing but withdrawn.
- SB 350 (J Ford): Small Claims Appointed Counsel.

Late last week, [65 area businesses, religious organizations, and community groups](#) released a letter opposing the number of bills impacting Indianapolis, including SEA 148. If Indiana is going to advertise itself as a place for business, it needs to also be a place for employees. Why would businesses relocate to Indiana to only have their employees experience significant housing barriers? Thirty percent of Indiana residents are renters. People moving here, likely to rent at least initially, will soon learn that protections they had in other states under Landlord-Tenant Law are not protected in Indiana. Indiana needs more balance in its Landlord-Tenant Law.

A reminder of how we got here. Over recent years in Indianapolis, there have been a plethora of news stories and renter complaints depicting situations where renters were living in substandard housing conditions, were being retaliated against for enforcing their rights, or were being targeted with unfair evictions. The Indianapolis City-County Council's response was to pass [Ordinance 41](#), which contained some basic mechanisms to assist tenants. This ordinance included requiring Marion County housing providers to distribute a fact sheet about tenant rights. It also contained designated fines – allowed under state law – to curb retaliation by bad acting landlords. This was no “Tenant Bill of Rights” that has been passed in other cities. It was an extremely *basic* bill. Yet, the housing industry's response to tenants being allowed some basic rights was to demand our General Assembly remove *all* local control statewide. Over [900 evictions a week have been happening in Indiana under the CDC eviction moratorium](#). Indianapolis, in particular, has one of the highest eviction filing and court ordered eviction rates in the country. We still do not fully understand the true impact of SEA 148 which has become even more evident as debate has

continued and analysis of trailer bills has begun – questions on impact remaining unanswered. **Now is not the time to pass a rushed overhaul of Indiana’s Landlord-Tenant Law.**

SEA 148 had been vetoed by Governor Holcomb in 2020 because he felt the bill went too far. The legislation wipes out all local control of “any aspect of the landlord-tenant relationship.” The final vote last week in the Indiana Senate was 30-17. The Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI) appreciates the bipartisan collection of Senators who spoke and voted against the veto override. We also thank Governor Holcomb for his additional comments documenting his continued concerns with the legislation, even with possible trailer bill changes.

The Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana urges **against** a House veto override of SEA 148. We also demand passage of more state laws protecting the interests of Hoosier renters to ensure adequate balance in the Landlord-Tenant relationship.

What Can You Do?

- Contact your state legislator now and demand they not support a SEA 148 veto override. <https://prosperityindiana.org/Action-Center>
- Learn more on the FHCCI’s Public Policy Page: <https://www.fhcci.org/programs/public-policy/>
- Follow us on social media for breaking alerts.

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The Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI) is a private, non-profit fair housing organization founded in 2011 and based in Indianapolis, Indiana. Its mission is to ensure equal housing opportunities by eliminating housing discrimination through advocacy, enforcement, education and outreach. For more information, visit: [www.fhcci.org](http://www.fhcci.org)