



# NH Local Welfare Administrators Association

C/O Cornerstone Association Management  
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*Towards self-sufficiency...*

January 18, 2018

Honorable Joseph Hagan, Chair  
House Judiciary Committee  
NH State House  
LOB Room 208  
Concord, NH 03301

Re: Opposition of HB 1485 regarding additional Security Deposits on Rents

Dear Honorable Chairman Hagan and Committee Members,

The NH Local Welfare Administrators Association (NHLWAA) is a professional non-profit organization that works to support our municipal members to insure that we are providing the basic needs assistance to our residents (mandated under NH RSA 165) while being cognizant of the delicate balance of spending municipal taxpayer dollars. NHLWAA is submitting this letter in opposition to HB 1485 which would allow landlords to require additional Security Deposit funds to secure a place to live, and thus potentially increase the demand for municipal welfare assistance.

We have a unique situation in NH, where residential tax payers are required to be the safety net of all basic needs of residents without a financial limit. No other state has this dependency on its' local municipalities. While property tax payers are already paying rents and security deposits by funding municipal general assistance programs to prevent homelessness and to rehouse residents who are homeless, this additional Security Deposit Requirement would create a direct financial burden on Municipal Welfare Offices.

Allowing landlords to require first month rent and two months' security deposit would put an unreasonable burden on the most vulnerable of our society. Young and older residents, especially those relying on Social Security, would be priced out of the rental market because these populations are most likely not to have the savings needed to secure a rental unit. Residents who have always prided themselves on self-sufficiency would have no choice but to apply to Municipal Welfare and other social service agencies just to secure a place to live.

NHLWAA understands that the Committee has to make a difficult choice weighing the needs of landlords and their businesses against the residents of NH who have low to moderate income and need a place to live. Landlords are our biggest vendor and referral source for assistance requests. We value their business as a vital and basic need for residents. Unfortunately we have to realize that pricing constituents out of the rental market by requiring an additional month of security deposit when the vacancy rates are so low gives the landlord unfair advantage and would create a greater need for municipal welfare assistance. Landlords already have their choice of tenants to rent to while currently requiring first month rent and security deposit. Housing is not a choice but a basic human need all residents require.

We strongly urge you to consider these far reaching implications for the cost shifting an additional security deposit to the local taxpayers, struggling social service agencies and residents. Please oppose HB 1485.

Respectfully yours,

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