

## **Evidence in Support of the Amendment to the Early Leasing Ordinance (ELO), City Ordinance 8:350**

The document, compiled by members of the Graduate Employees Organization (GEO) Housing Caucus, contains collected evidence in support of the Early Leasing Ordinance. As it currently stands, the amendment advocates for prohibiting the advertising, showing, or leasing a rental unit until 210 days have elapsed since the start of the lease. This is a change from the current 70 day timeline. We have collected a range of materials from data gathered through public petitions, community surveys, press releases, public comment at City Council meetings, and media coverage. The Table of Contents below serves a guide to link you to each item.

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### **I. [Early Leasing Ordinance Petition - Spring 2021](#)**

*We, the undersigned renters and community members of Ann Arbor, call on the Ann Arbor City Council to change City Ordinance 8:350 such that it prohibits landlords from showing or leasing units until 240 days have elapsed for a 1-year lease.*

- 1,181 signatures
  - Ward of Signees
    - 30% in Ward 1
    - 7.8% in Ward 2
    - 13.5% in Ward 3
    - 23% in Ward 4
    - 21.3% in Ward 5
  - 79.1% of signees were University of Michigan students
    - 26.1% were GEO members

## II. Early Leasing Ordinance Survey - May 2021

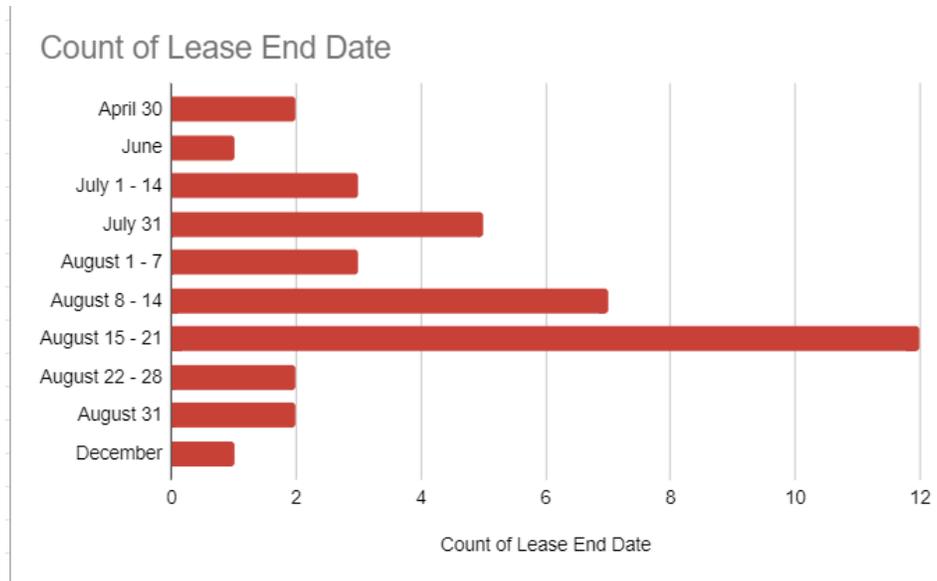
- Over 300 responses
- 91% said they have felt pressured by their landlord to renew their lease before they were ready
- 86% said they have not signed a lease term of less than 12 months
- After agreeing to renew a lease,
  - 15.6% of respondents have had to break the lease early  
\*note: this frequently comes at a significant cost
  - 35.6% have had to transfer the lease to another tenant
  - 73.3% have had to sublet their apartment to someone else before the end of their termed lease  
\*note: this is frequently done at rate that is subsidized by the lease holder
- 31.9% of respondents were GEO members, 68.1% were not

## III. Leasing Start and End Dates - Summer 2021

- Lease Start Dates
  - Range from May 1 to November
  - Most frequent dates: August 1 and August 15
  - Majority provided fall August 1 - 7, August 15 - 21, or August 22 - 28



- Lease End Dates
  - Range April 30 to December
  - Most frequent dates: July 31, August 13, and August 15
  - Majority provided fall between August 8 - 14 and August 15 - 21



- Accounts from landlords and students note that the University of Michigan used to consistently start classes the Tuesday following Labor Day Weekend; however, in recent years, the University has moved the start of the school year back a week. As such, leases in Ann Arbor have moved to start, at latest, the week prior to Labor Day Weekend. Students noted a preference for moving mid-August during the week before classes begin, as many have orientations, training, or placement examinations that week.
  - Fall 2019 - Classes began Tuesday, September 3 (day after LDW)
  - Fall 2020 - Classes began Monday, August 31 (week prior to LDW)
  - Fall 2021 - Classes begin Monday, August 30 (week prior to LDW)
  - Fall 2022 - Classes begin Monday, August 29 (week prior to LDW)
  - Fall 2023 - Classes begin Monday, August 28 (week prior to LDW)

#### **IV. Emails to City Council - June 2021**

- Overall 175 emails to City Councilors noting support for Early Leasing Ordinance changes, particularly for the 210 day timeline and the right to renew.

#### **V. Organizational Outreach - Fall 2020 - Summer 2021**

- *Tenant Outreach*
  - The University of Michigan Central Student Government
  - The University of Michigan College of Literature, Arts, and Sciences Student Government
  - The Ann Arbor Tenants Union
  - Graduate Employees Organization 3550 General Membership and Stewards

- Greek Life
- House Officers Association (Michigan Medicine Residents)
- The Inter-Cooperative Council
- The Huron Valley Democratic Socialists of America Housing Committee
- Frequent engagement with renters on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Reddit
- *Landlord Outreach*
  - Small Landlord Individual Meetings
  - Washtenaw County Apartment Association
  - Internal GEO Member Landlords

## VI. Housing Horror Stories - May 2021

- Prompt: *Tell us about the bad housing situations that resulted from being forced to sign a lease in early Fall! GEO and CSG (Central Student Government) plan to use these testimonials to push City Council to require landlords wait 210 days after the lease begins before asking you to renew.*
- 35 anonymous responses total were collected. This set of stories detailed numerous hardships endured by renters, mostly pertaining but not limited to the problems regarding the current 70 day leasing cycle. This includes practices of landlords who both adhered to and violated the current ordinance. Below is a selection of the responses, edited for grammar and length, that were most relevant to the proposed amendment of the Early Leasing Ordinance.
  - “Rather than this being a story of an intimidating landlord, this is a story of coercion by a property management company. I have lived in my current house for the past 3 years, and every year, the renewal date has moved earlier and earlier -- from early December to mid November to, in 2020, the first week of October. Coercing me and my roommates into renewing our lease early isn't just confined to the spooky and sudden email asking if we will renew. That email always comes with a "renew this lease now, or we'll raise your rent..." Barring landlords and property management companies from early lease renewal would be a modicum of support for tenants in Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County that honestly should already be on the books already. “
  - “I was with Wickfield for 3 years. In my first year, they contacted me in MID OCTOBER about renewing my lease. I had moved in on Sept 1st. In a panic I renewed my lease very early. I then received emails saying they were going to show my apartment anyway. I had to argue with them to tell them not to show my apartment.”

- “We signed with Z place because we were super rushed to find a place and they go quickly, they raised our rent \$150 the second we signed the lease. “
- “Due to financial stress (and, not gonna lie, dread at the thought of having to find another apartment), my roommate and I resigned our lease a month after moving in. We felt somewhat pressured because our landlord told us that she was raising rent on new tenants in the fall, so if we didn't decide to resign before November, our rate would increase.”
- “Vic village is extremely predatory when it comes to signing and re-signing a lease!! They promised a flat rate in conversation but hiked prices the day after leases became available - currently paying \$50 per month more than anticipated. It was absolutely absurd that we had to re-sign almost year in advance without knowing anything about what was going to occur in the pandemic. [They] treated my physician dad, who is paying about 30k for his kids to live in this building, like an idiot for calling them out on their ambiguous terminology and lackluster answers to re-signing questions - extremely racist and disappointing. “
- “My roommate and I signed for our current apartment in the fall of 2019; when the COVID pandemic occurred we were unable to get out of our lease and had to return to campus and each pay \$900 in rent even though we had all classes on line for the 2020-21 school year...We had some reservations about re-signing for next year (which we had to do this past fall) but ended up doing so despite the uncertainty at that time over how 2021-22 classes would be conducted because it was too much of a hassle to look for other housing options.If we had been doing the re-signing process later in the year, it would have been easier to look at other housing options and we would have had a better idea of what classes for at least the fall semester would look like. “
- “Every year I have lived in my current apartment (began leasing August 2016), my landlord has asked me to renew my lease before the city code required 70 day period has elapsed. I have reminded them every year they cannot ask me before this date, and refuse to provide an answer until then. I ended up resigning, but it was still an unnecessary stress to think they may lease to someone else before I answered them. “
- “This past November, [my landlord] asked me to resign my lease for August 2021-2022. At the time, I did not have committee approval to graduate yet, so I resigned in case I would still need to be on campus in Fall 2021. I received permission to write my dissertation in December, and set a defense date for April 2021 with approval from my committee. Since I fell within the grace period graduation deadlines, I would be graduating in August 2021, and moving to start a postdoc in September. If my landlord had given me more time to decide, I

would not have resigned my lease for 2021-2022. Now I need to find someone to take over my lease or sublet, since I am unable to break the contract.”

- “As a PhD student, I don't know when I will leave Ann Arbor. None of us do. We are here until we build up a portfolio good enough to land a job, but there is no way to know in advance how many years our research will take, or how big a portfolio must be to get hired and leave Ann Arbor. Many of us also do field work, where we move out of Ann Arbor for a year or two in the middle of our studies. But we don't know more than a few months in advance when we will have the funding and opportunity to do that. Uncertainty about where in the world we will be living next year is built into our job. For the last 6 years I have had to gamble in October that I will still be living in Ann Arbor during the span 12 to 22 months later! PhD students can't see two years into our futures.”
- “Moving to Ann Arbor was a terrible experience because of the lease timing situation. Grad students find out that we are moving to Ann Arbor for the first time usually in April. So by the time we are looking for housing (May/June/July), very very few apartments are available, and they're the worst units. If we aren't coming from a college town, then we assume renting is normal and you sign a lease around 30 days before you move in. That means looking in July/August. Everyone who was in Ann Arbor the previous year either renewed their lease in October/November, or signed a new lease then. So almost everything was already off the market when I was looking for a place that first year. It made finding any place at all hard, and forced me to settle for a terrible place; low quality and far from town. “
- “There is no need for the Ann Arbor housing market to be on this timing cycle. Landlords all over the country do just fine with finding new tenants 30 days before a lease starts. Ann Arbor has some of the highest occupancy rates in the US: there is no risk that units are going to go empty if we all wait to sign fall leases until the summer. They have a highly captive audience: students, faculty, and staff at the university aren't going anywhere--we cannot. And the university brings more new people to town every year than developers add beds to the housing supply. There is no point to the timing of the lease signing cycle except landlords' insecurities, and those insecurities are wholly unfounded. “
- “Finding housing is consistently one of the biggest stressors in Ann Arbor as a full time student. Having to scramble to find housing as early as September a year ahead of time is genuinely awful and taxing especially as someone who is scared by the ever increasing rent prices close to campus. “
- “Ann Arbor's housing policies, especially in regards to students, have had significant and serious issues for years that Ann Arbor City Council has done little to address. One of the most significant issues is the way students are pressured

and forced to sign expensive 12 month leases without much time to think about their future plans and with significant risk lacking a way to back out. As freshmen, we are forced to sign leases for the next school year only having lived in a dorm for 2.5 months. This is a scary situation and it is irresponsible that the City as well as the University has not done anything significant to relieve this burden. “

- “We are pressured to renew our leases immediately after our initial lease begins—having to choose with so little time to understand what our plans are for the next year are, whether we want to find a new roommate, or look for other alternatives. It is a daunting decision, and nobody with 9 months left of their current lease should have to sign for another 12 months...It is irresponsible for this system to exist in the way it does, and Ann Arbor City Council must do something to change this.”
- “Even when the council passes laws about showing places a certain number of days or weeks before they're officially for lease, landlords just bypass it. For example, I was interested in an apartment last year and was told that they couldn't show me the place due to these new restrictions, but I should just knock on the door and see if someone is home and if they'd be willing to show me around. This is unsafe, places inappropriate burdens on renters, and really violates the intention of the law, but the landlords don't care as long as they have their overpriced units filled. “
- “Last fall, I don't remember if it was October or November, I was in a zoom meeting for class when my landlord came to our rental to give someone a tour. She hadn't let us know ahead of time and we were all surprised she had already started looking for new tenants. One of my housemates began to panic and asked if she had already found someone for the 2021-2022 school year. She said no but that we had priority before any interested parties. We asked her to give us some time to see if we wanted to renew our lease since we were sophomores who didn't really know what we were doing and did not know what situation we would be in next year because of Covid. She sent us multiple emails basically pressuring us to sign the lease and my housemates felt the pressure and we eventually signed the lease. Due to the high cost of utilities, we regretted our decision and soon decided to let her know we wanted to find people to transfer our lease.”
- “Landlord made us resign in early October (literally October 5). We asked for an extra week to figure it out and they told us they couldn't guarantee us the house in a week. That's obvious bullshit, but we didn't know it at the time. By January, I knew that after the covid months with my roommates, I couldn't do another year, but of course I was stuck having resigned a lease less than a month and a half after moving in. “

- “Our landlord, Michigan Rental, emailed my roommates and I once in September, less than two weeks after moving in, to ask us to resign the lease. We didn’t respond and they didn’t email us again. In March, I reached out to them asking if we can resign the lease; they then informed me that they had already found new tenants and that the new lease had been signed for months already. So essentially, I found out that I had to move out and that I didn’t have an option to renew because the landlord had found new people behind our backs...That initial email was, of course, illegal, but Ann Arbor’s lack of protection for tenants meant that I essentially had no recourse. So now I’m screwed and looking for a new place! ”
- “I am very disheartened by the overall "protocol" for U of M off-campus housing for students in that you feel as though you MUST re-sign or sign a lease so early on. The pressure is anxiety inducing and it is very hard to make good decisions based on this. My husband and I had to re-sign our lease 2 months into our lease in fear that we may lose it before we were even able to decide if we were happy there. I don't even personally blame my landlord, but instead the overall culture of student housing in Ann Arbor. It feels like a monopoly in that they don't care who signs, they just know someone will -- so landlords don't have an incentive to wait to book up their next year.”

**VII. Testimony at City Council Meetings - April 5th, July 6th, and June 7th, 2021**

- Below are transcribed testimony from the City Council meetings in support of the Early Leasing Ordinance. They have been slightly edited for length and to focus on the importance of the 210-day proposal. The minute in which the speaker begins beside each name.
- April 5th, 2021 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6sT3UgNtx8>
  - Ember McCoy – 4:59
    - “I’m really sick of hearing landlords speak on behalf of students claiming that this 240-day ordinance change would be bad for students when its students who are crafting and pursuing this change in the first place. And it’s not just graduate students, we have over 1000 signatures on this petition, a sizable amount of them are graduate and undergraduate students, and we also have substantial support from the student government, which is undergrads, and Greek life. So landlords are saying this is an issue for students, students themselves are not. I think we also need to recognize that students are not the only renters in Ann Arbor, and while I’m a student, I’m so one who lived in Ann arbor for several years as a non-student and it’s very frustrating to move leave or just find new

housing here outside of the academic cycle and I think this ordinance change can do a lot help alleviate problems for non-students too and it's time for us to stop acting like students are the only renters in Ann Arbor when we know the universities president is perpetuating some of these housing problems in the first place. I also want to make it known that in the hour since you've discussed this, landlords have already begun sending fear mongering emails to their tenants containing false and misleading information to scare them into coming out against it. These are the kind of predatory manipulative tactics that we as renters have to deal with every day in this town, and I hope you can see who holds the power in this conversation and can use your position as elected officials to flip that to actually support what tenants are acting for, which I know man you say you care a lot of about."

- Cara Thuringer - 5:05
  - "Something that really disturbs is hearing landlords claiming to have tenants' interest at heart, when my landlord only really contacts me to pay rent and ignores me when I inform them that my 50 year old stove is broken and my faucet isn't working. You know, I think it's very disingenuous for landlords to say that they have the interest of their tenants at heart given that they so very rarely make substantive contact with those tenants. Furthermore, the 70-day leasing ordinance is just simply ... 70 days is not enough to know what you need to know about an apartment to determine whether you want to stay there for another year. If you start your lease in September, as many leases do in Ann Arbor, you haven't spent a winter in that apartment you don't know how well the windows are going to retain heat you don't know how much you're going to be spending on heating and cooling costs. I think it's really unfair to expect renters to make a decision so quickly. I also think my experiences with Ann Arbor landlords have been among the worst of anywhere that I've ever lived, so It's really disappointing for me to see how broadly the city of Ann Arbor fails tenants. "
- June 7th, 2021 - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFZ6\\_lcyB8w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFZ6_lcyB8w)
  - Ember McCoy - 0:11
    - "It seems like everyone involved agrees that this ordinance needs to be moved from 70 days...There has been a lot of discussion over what number of days is best for university students, but much of this discussion has also ignored what university students are saying is best for them. GEO and CSG have worked diligently collecting stories, nearly 12000 signatures and releasing a joint press release that a 210-day timeline would compromise the needs of both grad and undergrad students. We've spoken with and received support from members of Greek life, the

inter-cooperative council, Michigan med residents, and numerous students and non-students alike. Falling in mid-march, when considering that most leases begin in mid-August, this timeline would allow for a housing search before classes end, would fall within reason for incoming new residents and graduate students confirming their attendance at u of M, and would significantly reduce the time between lease signing, lease end, and deposit collection. And I don't want to underestimate the significance of having 30 more days for the deposit on a new lease at our current rate, deposits are often an entire month's salary, and having 2 deposits in landlord hands as we wait between lease agreements is a significant financial burden. Of course, this change doesn't just benefit students, but also countless non-students that live in Ann Arbor and are often negatively impacted by a leasing cycle that is dominated by the university. I've experienced this personally since I was a student for only half of the 6 years I was a renter in Ann Arbor and my current roommate is a healthcare worker at U of M whose job uncertainty was a reason for distress around the current ordinance this fall."

- Avery Winn - 0:18
  - "I'd like to make rebuttals to the landlord's point. Many landlords having been attempting to refute our claims as to why this ordinance is helpful to students... Tenants need protections tenants don't have the resources that they need. This early leasing ordinance is so important because of the power imbalance between the landlord and the tenant. Ultimately many landlords are saying the students like to lease early because they are basically just leasing early unnecessarily... There is no reality in which students are just doing this out of habit or university culture or whatever the landlords are claiming and people will call apparent complexes that are not offering leases because it is so difficult to get a lease that even if you don't see an advertisement for an available unit you still need to call because there is no other way to get housing for a lot of people where they need it besides just trying all of their options and hoping that one of them works. Basically 210 days is not a burden to students, because it does not put the leasing period at the end of the 2nd semester. And it would also overlap with the summer. It gives the students the opportunity to make choices."
  
- Nithya Arun - 0:21
  - "I am a rising senior and the student body president at the University of Michigan. I am here to advocate for amendments to the Early Leasing Ordinance as it prohibits the listing showing or leasing of units until 210 days have elapsed since the start of the lease. As the student body president I am tasked with being the rep voice of the student body and therefore am charged with advocating for the needs of all students on

campus whether they are undergraduates or graduate students. Too many times students have expressed their frustration with how they have been forced to sign a lease too early, sometimes within days of moving in. I can also personally attest to the 70 day period being far too short a time span between move in and leasing signing. It puts an abundant amount of stress on students and oftentimes results in students being in an uncomfortable and sometimes even unsafe living situation. U of M students comprise a large portion of your constituency and I urge you to act swiftly and not table this resolution in order to meet the needs of students, which is not a matter of convenience but an issue that is in fact about the safety and wellbeing of your constituents. I also want to comment on what landlord Nick [Else] said earlier. As a student, an undergrad, I want the early leasing ordinance to be extended to 210 days, that falls around March-time, a lot of the leases that I have signed have been in mid to kind of 20th of August time range, so it would fall around March, and that is not during finals season. I would also just add that the nature of being a college student is having to deal with multiple assignments and multiple finals at once, so juggling this is nothing new...I would think a longer period of time between move-in and lease signing would allow students to compare their housing options and to really get to know what they are getting themselves into. They will also, as Avery mentioned, have a better idea of their plans for next year and base their own lived experience. And I also want to add that students can speak for themselves and tenants don't have [audio blip] we are the ones being affected by these changes."

- Amir Fleischmann - 0:25
  - "I am a member of the GEO Housing Caucus, and I'm here to talk about the ELO proposal. I want to begin by emphasizing that this is a grassroots proposal that has been brought to you by renters. We are coming to the City Council right now because we are defenseless against our landlords. When they have a demand they want to make to us, a change to the lease they want to propose or a rent increase, there is nothing we can do. You can help us, but you have to listen to us. Renters are not represented on the City Council, there is not a single renter on this council despite us making up a majority of the population in Ann Arbor. That gives you an extra obligation when they speak to you. The way we are treated now is as if we have no rights in our own homes...This is why the [ELO ordinance] is so important to us. This is not a little issue that is a nuisance a couple of times a year. It really harms people. There has been some concern about the 210-day number. Let me say this clearly- renters are asking for 210 days. GEO members initially wanted 270 days, but we

listened to concerns of other renters, including undergrads, and 210 days is the compromise...Other jurisdictions have 310 days, we are asking for 2/3 or that. We are not entitled to fewer rights because we have the misfortune of living in Ann Arbor. Everyone I know has had problems with the way the ordinance is set up right now. It sometimes creates serious financial hardship for people, it could lead to bankruptcy. 210 is already a significant compromise in 5 months in advance of when it begins is a serious financial commitment. Having to sign it half a year before it begins is ridiculous. 180 days is not acceptable. We just heard the landlords talk on behalf of students. I'm not sure where he gets the chutzpah to be doing that, but I'm asking you to listen to the actual students here. We are speaking in one voice, and we are asking for a right to renew for 210 days."

- July 6th, 2021 - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=63Y\\_ImDsFrs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=63Y_ImDsFrs)
  - Elliott Brannon - 0:15
    - "I am a medical student at the University of Michigan. I am calling in support of [ELO Ordinance], which extends the time at which rental units can be shown by landlords. I am originally from rural Arkansas, but I've lived in Chicago, New Orleans, Tucson AZ, Santiago Chile, Seoul Korea, [audio blip] and rural Thailand, and I've never experienced that kind of pressure to renew my lease as is the norm in Ann Arbor MI. Working with housing rights groups in the area, I've heard countless stories from students and non-students about this issue. Over and over I've heard that students have been forced to sign a lease with people they don't know and don't have the time to get to know. One student recounted being locked into a lease with someone they discovered to be violent and abusive. From non-students I've talked to people who've planned to move to Ypsilanti or even Detroit because of Ann Arbor's tenants' rights crisis, the early leasing being part of that crisis. The new ordinance would certainly help to address this part, but folks I've talked to have gone on to point out that Ann Arbor has a housing crisis. The houses are there, I've heard from a number of folks how many properties the city owns that could be turned into affordable housing units, but maybe that's a different issue. It's my understanding that GEO, CSG, and a group of Council Members have done an incredible amount of work to understand this issue, talk to renters, and agree that a timeline of 210 days for a lease renewal would adequately protect renters. I urge Council Members to work to understand the issue from the

perspective of renters and support the ordinance to amend section 8:530 of Chapter 105.”

- Amir Fleischmann - 0:19
  - “I’m a grad student of U of M, I am a member of GEO, and I’m really excited that our proposed amendment to the ELO is at its 3rd 1st reading, I’d really like to thank the sponsors of the ordinance, Elizabeth Nelson, Lisa Disch and Travis Radina. I have to say that I’m a little bit frustrated that it sounds like the number of days that this ordinance would cover is still being debated by members of this council. I just want to say this again. The people have spoken loud and clear. 210 days is the number. I really really hope that that number is not changed in this meeting. It is a little unbelievable to me that some members of council think that they know better than renters themselves about our experience in this town. We have our lived experience and nobody on council shares that. The 30 days between 180 and 210 makes a big difference in our lives. We are telling you this - listen to us. This number was reached by a grassroots process between GEO, undergrads, and community members. You don’t have the authority to override it! ... Renters have rights. We need to stand up for them and implement this ordinance. It needs to be 210 days, it needs to include just cause eviction. These are basic human rights. I have a right to the quiet enjoyment of my residence. That right is violated every time my landlord tells me I have 24 hours to decide to renew after only having lived there for less than 3 months. Please, please, please, help us through the government, stand up to the landlords.”

#### **VIII. Public Coverage of Early Leasing Ordinance Advocacy**

- The following is a collection of the public media coverage related to leasing in Ann Arbor. The first two items are statements by CSG and GEO in support of the Early Leasing Ordinance. The remainder is press coverage, ordered oldest (November, 2011) to newest (July, 2021), of Ann Arbor’s leasing situation and the Early Leasing Ordinance.
- GEO/CSG joint press release; May 16th, 2021
  - <http://bit.ly/ELOstatement>.
    - “The Graduate Employees Organization and University of Michigan’s Central Student Government are calling on Ann Arbor City Council to protect renters by extending the Early Leasing Ordinance (city ordinance 8:530) to prohibit the listing, showing, or renting of units until 210 days

have elapsed since the start of a lease. We are also calling for ordinance amendments that give incumbent tenants the right of first refusal regarding lease renewal and bar landlords from inquiring about interest, intentions, or a commitment regarding lease renewal with incumbent tenants until 210 days have elapsed since the start of the lease. This timeline was decided upon jointly by undergraduate students and GEO members. It was chosen to give renters the maximum amount of time to decide whether they want to renew their lease, minimize the time between signing and move-in, and ensure that the sometimes hectic renewal period does not overlap with finals.”

- CSG regents report; June 17th, 2021
  - <https://regents.umich.edu/files/meetings/06-21/2021-06-II-11.pdf>
    - “Early Leasing Ordinance (ELO): We are collaborating with the Graduate Employees’ Organization (GEO) to extend the ELO from 70 days to 210 days. Students oftentimes find themselves in unfavorable living situations because of the short time span between move-in and leasing. Therefore, we will be continuing to advocate for this change in the ordinance.”
- The Ann Arbor News, *Nov 19, 2011: Rush to sign leases: University of Michigan students lock down off-campus properties nearly a year early*
  - <http://www.annarbor.com/business-review/the-rush-to-sign-leases-many-students-lock-down-off-campus-properties-nearly-a-year-in-advance/>
    - “The ordinance used to make landlords wait 90 days, but it was shortened to 70.

But that 70 days’, Khan said, ‘isn’t nearly enough.’

‘I don’t know how and why Ann Arbor got to be the way it is,’ she said. ‘Students who get accepted into graduate school here will call me in the spring after getting their acceptance letters, and I have to tell them, ‘Sorry, we don’t have anything.’”

- “Ehn of the Washtenaw Area Apartment Association said Ann Arbor is one of the only cities in the country with a housing ordinance like this. And in her opinion, it’s dangerous.

‘With the early lease ordinance, it keeps a landlord from going with students to look at houses, so students are going on their own,’ she said. ‘They are knocking on student doors asking to come in. We think it’s dangerous.’”

- “‘When I started in the business 18 years ago, students didn’t even start looking until January,’ [Ehn] said. ‘That seemed logical to me.’

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‘As the leasing has gotten earlier and earlier in the year, we have more and more students changing roommates, wanting to get out of leases, and having their situations change or not coming back to the university,’ she continued. ‘I wish landlords couldn’t sign leases until at least December.’”

- Michigan Daily, *October 19, 2017: How local leasing companies are sidestepping city ordinance*
  - <https://www.michigandaily.com/campus-life/lack-transparency-inconsistencies-through-prime-student-housing-lessors-leave/>

- “Ann Arbor law prohibits leasing to occur until 70 days after the current lease period begins, meaning that students have only 70 days to decide if they want to renew their lease for the upcoming year. The time period between the date Prime tenants could move in — according to the website, Aug. 25 at the earliest, with an early move-in cost of \$600 — and the renewal date of Oct. 20, is only 56 days, not 70.

Per Prime Student Housing, students could make appointments to view apartments or residences starting Oct. 23 — though the appointments would begin Oct. 27. “

- “In comparison to other properties on campus — such as Cappel Management and Deinco Properties, Campus Management, Cabrio Properties and high-rises like Landmark — Prime is not completely unique.

For Cappel/Deinco Properties, though reservations are accepted Oct. 2 through Nov. 8 — similar to Prime — the company’s website explicitly states: “Leasing for Fall 2018-2019 does not begin until Nov. 10, 2017. ... If current tenants renew, then the fee is returned. If reservationists cancel or do not show up on 11/10 to sign the lease then reservation fee is forfeited. If the lease is signed then the \$500 becomes part of the security deposit.”

This information — that the soonest the company can show properties or sign leases is November, but reservations can be taken as early as October — is also repeated on the automated message when calling the office.”

- “Further leasing difficulties can be found at Campus Management properties. The company utilizes a first come, first serve policy when it comes to applications for houses and apartments and states on their website that — in reference to this policy — ‘Unfortunately, in our fast

paced rental market this does occasionally create footraces between groups vying to get back to our office first.”

Campus Management also charges a fee that equates to half a month of rent if an applicant decides to withdraw their application. The company explains this fee is necessary due to the lost time created by a withdrawn application.”

- Michigan Daily, *March 29, 2021: GEO and Councilmember Nelson look to change leasing laws to ease student housing hunt*
  - <https://www.michigandaily.com/ann-arbor/geo-and-councilmember-elizabeth-nelson-look-to-change-leasing-city-ordinance-to-ease-hunt-for-student-housing/>
    - “This forces tenants to make a commitment that is very difficult to get out of, and it puts a lot of pressure on people who really do not know where they’re going to be that far in advance, and it forces people to make difficult decisions that they’re really not prepared to make at that time,’ Fleischmann said. ‘As this current ordinance stands, it gives landlords legal license to bully tenants into resigning their lease before they’re ready.”
    - “After their lease started in August 2020, McCoy said she and her sister were approached by their landlord on Oct. 19, which was before the 70-day ordinance currently in place and thus illegal. McCoy said she was asked to renew her lease, notified of an increase in rent and given five days to decide if she and her sister would be living there the following year.  
  
McCoy said her sister was in the process of applying to graduate school and was uncertain if she would be staying in Ann Arbor for the following year. The pair did not see the email from their landlord when it was first sent out five days earlier, and when they opened the email, they realized they had 24 hours to make a decision.  
  
‘We just needed more time,’ McCoy said. ‘They gave us 24 hours, and obviously nothing changed about our circumstance within 24 hours, and so they signed our lease to someone else the first week of November for August 2021 to 2022.’”
    - “The reason there hasn’t been any meaningful enforcement probably is because the standard is so low that we’ve kind of set the bar so that everybody can easily meet (the 70-day limit), there’s little temptation to follow (the current ordinance) because (70 days) already is such a low bar,’ Nelson said. “

- MLive, *April 7, 2021: Proposed law gives Ann Arbor renters 240 days before landlords can show occupied apartments*
  - <https://www.mlive.com/news/ann-arbor/2021/04/proposed-law-gives-ann-arbor-renters-240-days-before-landlords-can-show-occupied-apartments.html>
- MLive, *June 6, 2020: Proposed Law Giving Ann Arbor Renters more Protections*
  - <https://www.mlive.com/news/ann-arbor/2021/06/proposed-law-giving-ann-arbor-renters-more-protections-back-on-council-agenda.html>
- Michigan Daily, *June 9, 2021: City Council discusses the Hayner Recall, Early Leasing Housing proposal, Valhalla Ann Arbor Site Plan*
  - <https://www.michigandaily.com/news/city-council-discusses-the-hayner-recall-early-leasing-housing-proposal-valhalla-ann-arbor-site-plan/>
- CM Nelson City Council Blog, *July 4th: Early Leasing Ordinance Update: Right to Renew*
  - <https://www.a2elnel.com/post/early-leasing-ordinance-update-right-to-renew>
    - “The current Ann Arbor Early Leasing ordinance prohibits a landlord from showing apartments to prospective tenants (or signing leases for the subsequent term) earlier than 70 days into a current lease. However, renters in some parts of the city tell us that the pressure to renew happens sooner than that - landlords often ask about lease renewals after only 50 or 60 days. Even strict compliance with the 70 day timeline means that tenants are renewing leases (and paying rental deposits) as long as ten months in advance of the next leasing term.

We have an extremely inequitable system in some parts of our local rental market. Committing deposits this far in advance grossly extends the timeline when tenants actually have TWO outstanding deposits: one for their current rental unit and one for their future rental unit. In some neighborhoods, the cost of an apartment is not just the deposit and the monthly rent— the cost of housing includes the additional burden of having a deposit held for nearly ten additional months in advance of the leasing terms. Our competitive housing market is hurting people of less means.”

- Michigan Daily, *July 8, 2021: Early leasing changes move forward in Ann Arbor City Council*
  - <https://www.michigandaily.com/news/early-leasing-changes-move-forward-in-ann-arbor-city-council/>
  - ““These are basic human rights,” Fleischman said. “I have a right to the quiet enjoyment of my residence. That right is violated every time a landlord tells me I have 24 hours to decide to renew after only having lived there for less than three

months. Please, please, please help us through the government. Stand up to the landlord.”

- “Nelson also reiterated the importance of the different voices that came together to inform the timeline in the proposed ordinance, including GEO and Central Student Government (CSG).
- “The other point I would make is that one of the reasons that we have central leadership bodies within the University community is that they are representing their colleagues, and so I cannot overstate the significance of the leadership and the collaboration that happened between GEO and CSG and so I really, really hope that we can respect that,” Nelson said.”