Legislation Text

File #: 22-1383, **Version:** 1

Resolution to Recommend Discussion of Right to Renew to City Council
Approved by: Ann Arbor Renters Commission
Whereas, According to R-21-362, the Ann Arbor Renters Commission was created to "[p]ropose, evaluate, recommend, and respond to policies, practices, or laws that affect renters in the City, including, but not limited to: housing affordability, transportation access, land use, public health and safety, and economic development;"

Whereas, The Renters Commission should strive to represent "perspectives in the City, such as student, youth, low-income, LGBTQ, immigrant, persons with criminal records, persons receiving rental subsidies, cooperative or group housing, tenant advocacy groups, persons who have experienced homelessness, or historically underrepresented groups;"

Whereas, Evictions are currently rising (1) in the wake of the termination of the national eviction moratorium; (2)

Whereas, In the United States, 17% of LGBTQ+ people experience homelessness at some point in their lives. This is more than twice the rate found in the general populace. This number is significantly higher for transgender people.; (3)

Whereas, According to a 2020 paper by Hepburn et al., which accessed millions of recorded court eviction cases between 2012 and 2016 in 39 states, "[b]lack renters received a disproportionate share of eviction filings and experienced the highest rates of eviction filing and eviction judgment;" (4)

Whereas, in the City of Ann Arbor, tenants are not guaranteed the opportunity to renew their current lease unless expressly stated in their leasing contract. The result of this is instability in the lives of many of our city's tenants;

Whereas, A coalition of local organizations including the Graduate Employees' Organization, The Lecturers' Employee Organization, the House Officers Association of the University of Michigan, the Ann Arbor Tenants Union, the Washtenaw Housing Alliance, the Huron Valley Area Labor Federation AFL-CIO, Rackham Student Government, and the Huron Valley Democratic Socialists of America has endorsed the adoption of the language found in Appendix A (hereafter referred to as Right to Renew) as a city ordinance; (5)

Whereas, The purpose of Right to Renew is to prevent unjust and unnecessary evictions and to increase the stability of tenants' lives by providing an enumerated list of circumstances under which a tenancy may be ended by a landlord with good cause;

Whereas, As of Aug 10, 2022, the aforementioned coalition had collected over 700 petition signatures

in support of Right to Renew; (5) and

Whereas, The American Bar Association urges all local governments to implement Right to Renew laws and has provided the following explanation as its justification in doing so:

> "Forcing a household to relocate imposes significant disruption and potential hardship on the tenant, and should not be allowed without a legitimate reason. Allowing eviction without cause invites abuse, enabling a discriminatory, retaliatory, or otherwise illegitimate motive for ending a tenancy to be easily concealed behind a 'no cause' eviction" (6)

RESOLVED, The Renters Commission recommends that City Council adopt Right to Renew as amended in Appendix B (attached) as soon as possible; and

RESOLVED, The Renters Commission requests that if members of City Council draft alternative language to what is proposed in this resolution, that they do so in consultation with the Renters Commission and community advocates of the Right to Renew language.

Sponsored by: Councilmember Nelson

Footnotes:
1.
   https://www.npr.org/2022/05/04/1095559147/eviction-filings-are-up-sharply-as-pandemic-
   .
2. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/26/us/eviction-moratorium-ends.html>
3. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgbt-homelessness-us/>
4. <https://sociologicalscience.com/download/vol-7/december/SocSci_v7_649to662.pdf>
5.
   <https://docs.google.

6.
   <https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/directories/policy/midyear-2022/612-midyear-