

Ann Arbor Bill of Rights Campaign



X



Framing:

What's going on in Ann Arbor?

What are we doing here?

How do we win?

Where Are We



- Exceedingly High Rents in Ann Arbor
- Corporatized Landlords with worse and worse conditions empowered to drain every cent
- Pushing residents out to other areas causing rental increases in the metro areas

**Work for safe,
decent, affordable
housing!**

Volunteer at the Ann Arbor Tenants Union. Call or stop by to find out about free training and our current campaigns.

Ann Arbor Tenants Union
4001 Michigan Union
Ann Arbor, Mi 48109 763-6876

**Defend
tenants'
rights!**



What is the AATU?



- Started in the 1960s
 - Restarted organizing Aug 2023
- Working on organizing Tenant Associations
- Won complex specific agendas
 - Prevention of tenant removal
 - Improve living conditions



What is HVDSA?



- Local chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America
 - Made up of Socialists across Huron Valley area
 - > 400 dues-paying members
- Have done work in labor organizing, environmental work, and electoral actions, combining with AATU



HURON VALLEY
DEMOCRATIC
SOCIALISTS
of AMERICA

Tenant Bill of Rights

What is the Tenant Bill of Rights?



- Platform constructed by AATU and HVDSA aimed to move power from landlords to tenants
- A mindset shift from current status quo where landlords set rules and tenants follow
- Will require political campaigns at municipal, county, and/or state levels

What is the Tenant Bill of Rights?



- Right to Organize
- Right to Rent Control
- Right to Eviction Protection
- Right to Counsel
- Right to Truth in Renting
- Right to Housing Access
- Right to Repair and Deduct
- Right to a Fair Lease

Why Right to Organize

Ann Arbor Woods



- Organizer was putting up flyers and door knocking for a tenant union.
 - Had no aggressive behavior and did not have any complaints
- Property Manager threaten eviction from doing these things claiming “they were threatening”
- Had to get support from AA lawyers, politicians, and others to prevent eviction

Courthouse Square



- Senior Apartments in downtown Ann Arbor
- Union organizers were assisting some internal organizers doorknock and hang up flyers across
- Had a meeting with tenant lawyers that was helpful for residents
- Later Received Cease and Desist Email

Courthouse Square Letter



Dear Tenant Union Representatives,

This letter serves as formal notice that your presence and activities are no longer permitted at Courthouse Square.

During your recent visit to our property, you were accompanied by attorneys and were observed encouraging residents to pursue legal action against the property. You also informed our Property Manager that she was not welcome during this meeting that was conducted on-site. These actions were inappropriate, disruptive, and unacceptable.

We have made multiple good-faith efforts to engage with you constructively, including hosting meetings and maintaining open lines of communication via email. Despite our responsiveness, most of our communications have gone unanswered. We have addressed the concerns you raised to the best of our ability and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Courthouse Square is a Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) property, and rental rates are governed by HUD guidelines. Additionally, several units operate under Project-Based Voucher (PBV) programs administered through the Ann Arbor Housing Office. Rents are set by federal and state regulations and cannot be modified at will. Furthermore, the majority of our residents receive assistance that limits their housing costs to no more than 30% of their income, as required by HUD.

We have previously communicated that any resident with concerns about their rent or lease terms is welcome to discuss those matters directly with property management. To date, no such requests have been made.

Your recent conduct has caused unnecessary confusion and distress among our residents and has disrupted the normal operations of the property. Effective immediately, you are instructed to cease and desist all activities at Courthouse Square. Any further attempts to access the property or engage with residents on-site will result in legal action. Future correspondence regarding this matter will be handled by our legal counsel.

Please Govern Yourself Accordingly,

Right to Organize Language

What do we want?



- What does it include:
 - Allows organizers to post and pass information about organizing to individuals plus more
 - Allows both tenants and tenant organizers to do this
 - Landlord Requirements -> Prevent interference of this
 - Enforcement:
 - \$1000 violation investigated by Renters Commission
 - \$2000 for each violation after initial
 - Attorney fees covered by landlord

bit.ly/AARightToOrganize

What will it take? (5mo Plan)



- **February '26:** Feedback and support for a Resolution endorsing the *Right to Organize* by the Ann Arbor Renters Commission
- **March '26:** Final meeting of *Right to Organize* with City Council Members and other supporting parties. Review of language by City attorneys.
- **April '26:** Introduce *Right to Organize* in City Council. In Renters Commission, discussion of *Right to Counsel*.
- **May '26:** Continued discussion of *Right to Counsel*, put for review by City Attorneys. Introduction/ endorsement of *Right to Repair* in Commission.
- **June '26:** Final Vote *Right to Organize*. Request for endorsement *Right to Counsel* and *Right to Repair* (if more discussion needed). Continued review of *Right to Counsel* by City attorneys, review of *Right to Repair*.

Questions?