

Submitter: Rachel Freed
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB599

I am writing to express my opposition to SB 599, which seeks to prohibit landlords from inquiring about or disclosing the immigration status of applicants and from rejecting applicants based on their immigration status. I believe it could lead to unintended consequences that may undermine the housing market and the safety of communities.

One of the primary concerns with this legislation is that it may complicate the ability of landlords to make informed decisions regarding potential tenants. Landlords have a responsibility to ensure that their properties are rented to individuals who can fulfill the obligations of a lease, including financial responsibilities and adherence to community standards. Removing the ability to inquire about immigration status could complicate the vetting process and lead to increased risks for landlords and the communities they serve.

Additionally, this bill could inadvertently create a situation where landlords are unable to address issues related to residency and legal compliance. In cases where legal disputes arise, having a clear understanding of an applicant's immigration status can be crucial. It is important to ensure that all residents are legally entitled to occupy rental properties, both for the sake of community safety and for maintaining the integrity of the housing market.

Moreover, the implementation of this bill could lead to further legal complexities and potential liabilities for landlords. The ambiguity surrounding compliance with the law could expose landlords to legal challenges, ultimately discouraging them from renting properties altogether. This could exacerbate housing shortages, particularly in already vulnerable communities.

I urge you to reconsider the implications of SB 599 and explore more balanced approaches that protect the rights of all individuals while ensuring that landlords can effectively manage their properties. Thank you for your attention to this important matter, and I appreciate your consideration of my perspective.