

Submitter:

Donald Zobel

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2305

I oppose this bill. Partly, this is based on my experience as a board member of We Care, an organization that seeks to prevent and alleviate eviction and utility shutoffs in Benton Co. I have considered whether to fund thousands of cases involving eviction, and know the variety of circumstances that can lead to nonpayment of rent. Primary is that many jobs no longer pay a living wage. Secondarily, many of those in such situations are single parents or disabled, or victims of domestic violence, conditions over which they have little or no control. These are not rowdy, or careless, or destructive people and should always be given a chance to be heard before they lose their home and that of their dependents. Partly, my opposition is also based on my lifelong feeling that everyone, despite past behavior or misfortune, should be given a chance to overcome a threat as dire as eviction before it is carried out in every given instance.

Furthermore, I believe that most of the egregious conduct cited to support this measure is already covered by existing laws, and those who most deserve such careless treatment can already be evicted. There is no need to expand such behavior by the state to all those who may inadvertently fall into repeated failure to pay.