

**Name:** Katrina Mattern

**Title:** Senior Property Manager

**Organization or Agency:**

**Topic:** HB05242 - AAC THE COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES OF CRIMINAL RECORDS ON HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES.

Opposes

**Testimony:**

My name is Katrina Mattern and I am a Property Manager in Willimantic; I appreciate being able to speak on my opposition to HB 5242.

I would like to start off by saying that I am truly sympathetic to the need for housing for people with these high risk criminal histories, and I feel like we do our best at our property to provide housing opportunities for as many people as possible. This bill would create a protected class for convicted criminals and essentially equalize all past crimes when reviewing an application for a rental property. As a landlord, our residents rely on us to provide screening for all applicants for their safety and peace of mind, and this bill would prevent us from doing our job effectively. There is a very large difference between someone convicted for breach of peace as a teenager 10 years ago, and someone convicted for sexual assault of their minor neighbor 4 years ago. These crimes should not be treated equally, but they would be under HB 5242 as currently proposed. There's also no way to show repeated patterns of behavior that would be concerning.

I agree with someone who commented earlier that people are not just the crimes they have committed, but the look back time of only 3 years and no misdemeanors considered is very short time frame to show a positive change.

The federal Housing and Urban Development department put out a white paper in 2016 recommending use of an individualized assessment for all applicants with a criminal history. This is something we implemented at my property back then and many landlords have a similar process. We already look at the type of crime, the time since the crime, and will ask the applicant to share any relevant information they may want. This allows us to accept many residents with criminal histories, while screening out those that present a high risk to our residents and property.

Landlords and property owners should not be forced to accept high risk individuals at the cost of increased liability if anything happens, increased insurance premiums that will lead to higher rents, and most importantly increased safety concerns for our existing residents. I think the proposed 3 year look back period is far too short to allow a safe evaluation of the risk an applicant poses and I urge the committee to reconsider.

I would also support that the committee look into state and municipal governments stepping up to allocate more funding for transitional and supportive housing, as this could provide more immediate relief for these high risk individuals and might actually help a bit with the current apartment supply issue.

Thank you.