

March 10, 2021

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB 2159

Good afternoon Chairman Lefor and Members of the House Industry, Business & Labor Committee:

My name is Amanda Parent, Lobbyist for Havenpark Communities. There will be representatives from Havenpark and other manufactured home park owners and residents who will come after me and explain why SB 2159 as written, should be defeated.

This bill is far from a 'tenants' rights' bill. In fact, if passed as written, the effects of the mandates in the bill on manufactured homeowners across North Dakota will do just the opposite. It is the tenants who will bear the financial burden for this bill. Property owners, whether they own a manufactured home park, a four-unit apartment building, ~~or a multi-million dollar~~, multi-family development pass on costs of doing business, especially government mandates to their renters. SB 2159 is a heavy handed, targeted, unnecessary list of mandates, brought forward to squeeze out significant investments in North Dakota affordable housing markets.

Affordable housing options are vital for citizens and communities. Restricting these options, particularly after the year we experienced in 2020, is unwise. Investments into manufactured home parks, whether they originate in-state or from outside our borders, can help affordable housing options as those new owners invest into the development of those communities.

Havenpark properties have ~~about~~ ^{many} 1,800 households in North Dakota, and all of which are financed through Fannie Mae and include Tenant Lease Protections, as required by law. They have invested about \$4.3 million in 2020 alone in their 8 North Dakota properties, and their average rent increase is ~~\$27~~ ^{\$19} across those properties.

Emotions can run high when change occurs, especially if those affected by those changes don't feel properly informed. However, Havenpark did not break any laws. It is unfortunate that the communication with residents of one particular property in Bismarck is the cause of this bill. Communications practices can always be improved. It is important to be available, transparent, and responsive to tenant and local officials concerns.

Havenpark understands they could have done a better job when they assumed ownership of this particular property, and have actually learned from this situation from two years ago and modified some practices across their properties. *This is not a tenants rights bill it is a trial and Havenpark is the defendant*
The North Dakota Manufactured Housing Association claims they drafted this bill as a compromise to previous session attempts at a tenant-friendly bill. They did not however include three of the largest manufactured *community* homeowners in the state when working on these issues, and certainly did *including one of the largest fleets in the world* not calculate the financial impact the bill's provisions could have on the tenants themselves, or the hundreds of other smaller mobile home park owners in North Dakota.

We respectfully ask you render a DO NOT PASS recommendation on SB 2159.

There are others who will testify after me who will share their experiences and thoughts.