

## TO WHOM IT CONCERNS;

My name is Travis Laube and my previous address was 1025 Brookwood lane in West Fargo, ND. Which is a home located in a Havenpark community. I was purchasing a home from this community since November 2014. Now that home sits empty because of false claims against me. This company feels the need to bully and intimidate residents. There are a lot of residents that would like to speak out but feel intimidated and scared of retaliation. Since this company has entered North Dakota there has been an array of issues that I have been aware of and actively involved with. These issues range from water meters to damaging people's property from tree removal to non-emergency fixes deemed as emergency. I have stood up for the residents in Fargo/West Fargo against this predatory company and they have taken actions against me to make false claims that I was making DEATH THREATS towards staff. They did not have the proof to back these accusations up and still the judge sided with this company which is a serious injustice to me and any others that get in their way. I have lost over 35000 dollars due to them conducting business in this manner. I have lost my home and every dollar I have spent into improving the home over the past several years. Change needs to happen and it starts with putting laws into place that both governs owners and residents and protects both parties. This one sided nature of placing laws into effect that only benefit corporate interests needs to come to an end. It is harming these communities and the residents. Rent gouging, extortion, theft, intimidation, is all illegal activities and if I were to commit any of these crimes I'd be in jail. But it seems to me that because it's a company that says they are bettering these properties it's ok for them to use these means to get rich. So you as law makers need to step your game up and really take a look at what is really happening within these properties. I encourage you to drive around and knock on doors and talk to residents. You will see how scared they are when they do not want to talk to you about this for fear someone is watching and will have retaliation from the company for speaking out. I myself am proof they will go to any length to remove resistance from their agenda. I am not going to beg and plead for you to help, I am demanding it as it is your civic duty as people who hold positions to protect those you represent.

Sincerely,  
Travis A Laube

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Hello Chariman and Committee members.

I am submitting this anonymously because I'm very afraid of the retaliation that the company will do to any of us. I like our community and my home, it's the only home I've known.

I am a **homeowner** of a manufactured home in a Bismarck community that was purchased by a known predatory company. I have visited with many residents around the city about the company and their unfair and unjust ways of doing things. I have friends who have literally walked away from their homes, just to get out. I have friends who have sold their homes for next to nothing to get out of what they referred to as a "prison camp" and not a family friendly community anymore. People do not have peaceful living in the manufactured home communities anymore. They are living in fear. They are scared of fees that they'll be charged for whatever reason the property owners want to charge for. Affordable housing is quickly disappearing, and people are going to be out on the streets. Who will help us when that happens? What are their plans when they get all of us out?

I'm happy that there is some legislation to protect all of us as homeowners of manufactured homes and our community; as well as the owners of the land. This seems to be a fair bill for both sides and I support it. But I think that the "reasonable administrative fees" should be looked at a little closer. You and I as good business people, consider a "reasonable administrative fee" quite different than a predatory company does. Will there be a time frame for a fee or neverending? Will there be a limit on how many fees they can charge? What kind of rules will there be on "reasonable administrative fees"? How far are you going to allow a predatory company to go with "reasonable administrative fees"?

Thank you for your time.  
Concerned Homeowner who loves their community.

I've lived in a manufactured home housing community for over 8 years. We've been pretty lucky with our communities owners as our lot rent does not have severe increases every year. If we did, we wouldn't be able to afford here. Yes, the homes are less expensive than a house which helps make it more of an available option than houses do, which is why we purchased one. Our community owners are locals that help keep it in shape and are easily accessible if questions arise. Our streets are well maintained and the community is safe.

Thinking back to the sale of the community in town, we wouldn't be able to handle the fee increases. We'd be forced to sell, and that's if we could even find a buyer. You own the home but are subject to all the rules, regulations, and fees imposed upon you by the landowner. So many people I know living in a manufactured community live paycheck to paycheck. They budget for what they can but won't have funds available for the drastic increase as they are already scraping to get by and that's after working more than 1 job. Do we need to add more to our homeless population?

A drastic change in rules is also difficult. Take for instance pets. The past owner allowed 3 dogs. Now the current one only allows 2 dogs. Which dog do you get rid of? Do we add more to the pets at the humane societies which already see too many coming through? Or the story I heard about the kids. They saved and saved until they finally had enough money to buy the swingset. The new owners come in and ban swingsets 2 months after they just bought it.

How can we have people from other states knowing what is going on in our community? We need to keep ownership in our state. We need to protect these homeowners and their families. We need to keep our costs affordable as there isn't a lot of affordable housing out there in the community.

Hello Chairman Lefor, and Committee. My name, which I hesitate to give, due to concerns about retaliation, is Janet Wendel. I own a manufactured home. I raised my daughter in our safe, and friendly neighborhood, thru 2 year-long military deployments, and several in-state flood fights, until she married, and started a family of her own. I wish they were able to live in North Dakota, but, because our housing costs are so high, they can get more house for the dollar on the other side of the river, and with my 4th grandchild on his way, the bigger house is important. It is not just my loss, but North Dakota's loss, that they don't live here.

A few years ago, when an out-of-state investor or investment group 'acquired' the park I rent a lot in, I had no idea what we were in for. My park had always been full, with people on a waiting list to get in. All of a sudden, our lot rent went steeply up, new, unfriendly rules were decreed, and many people moved out. Since then, we have about 1/3 of the lots sitting empty, or with empty houses on them.

My way of living drastically changed. Money that I used to be able to donate to causes or candidates that I supported, now goes to the out-of-state park owners.

When a bare lot is priced so much higher, you can imagine what that does to every other type of housing.

At some point, like so many of my neighbors, I could be forced to go from being an independent taxpayer, to being forced to seek public assistance. I hate the thought of that.

For the seminar-trained, out-of-state investors, getting their residents out could be one goal, but whether they build something new on the site, or rent out the homes on their lots, having their residents classified as 'low income', is often a goal. If you are on a 'low income' program, you pay 1/3 of whatever your income is toward rent, and the taxpayer picks up the rest, no matter how high the rent is inflated. This causes all other housing options to go up in cost, and prices people out, putting more people in the unhappy position of needing public assistance. This is not good for North Dakota, or its taxpaying citizens.

There are groups that would help finance the park residents, to buy their park, and self manage, but the predators have figured out so many money streams to take from the residents and taxpayers, that they offer double, even triple, the assessed value of the parks, and wear down the owners, until they sell.

My question is, what are you going to do to protect us, and everyone else in the state, from the consequences of what has been allowed to happen? There has to be some balance here. There is making a profit, as a business, but there is also damaging the public good. We are already far past the tipping point. Thank you

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Mellisa Grosz, I previously lived at 1025 Brookwood Lane in West Fargo, ND. Which is a home that is located in a Havenpark Community. I had lived in Brookwood Mobile Home Park since November 2014, where I was purchasing my mobile home. I was evicted in December 2020 due to empty threats against my fiance, which they had no proof for. From the time Havenpark took over the Brookwood we were trying to help the residents of the three parks that Havenpark bought. Havenpark management saw us as a threat, so they came up with false allegations to have us removed. As advised, we moved out of the park before the eviction hearing. We were handed an eviction, even though we moved out. We have lost all our equity that we put into the house, and we explained to their finance company that we were no longer able to live in the park. This was very detrimental to us, since it made it very hard to find a place to live. It took us over three months to find a new home. Our animals are no longer able to enjoy the big fenced yard that they once had and I will no longer be able to grow a garden, since we are located in an apartment building.

There are many people that don't understand how a company can get away with taking people's possessions and enforcing such threatening rules, that don't allow people to live in a peaceful environment. By not giving us any equity from our house that is like stealing, but yet this company is not held accountable for their actions. Lawmakers need to start seeing this company for what it really is, a predatory company that is only after their bottom dollar. Lawmakers also need to start helping their constituents in fighting against this company, by passing the bills that are set before them to help protect the rights of the residents in these mobile home parks. We are talking about people's homes. I would like you to think about what it would be like to have to move out with a three day notice of a home that you have lived in for years, and lose things that you aren't able to take with you. Thank you for taking the time to read my statement.

Sincerely,  
Mellisa Grosz

Legislators,

Hi my name is Mike Connelly And I am a resident as well as a homeowner within Bismarck North Dakota. I do not reside in a manufactured home park. I am Just a citizen that tries to encourage our community through personal and business actions to make our communities better tomorrow than today.

So let me start with the chronological history of what is happened in Bismarck North Dakota in relation to the sale of at least 5 are manufactured home parks to a corporation that certainly has or appears to have no common decency and respect for people, let alone trying to make the community around them better as they do business within it.

When the original owner knew that they were going to sell the property they send the residents a memo stating they were going to raise the rent due to special assessments in the area as well as water rates going up. The assessment was factual, but the utility water rate was not as the city worked out a deal that made it more affordable for them rather than increasing the rate.

It was at this time that all the residents found out they were being sold to a company called Havenpark. They came in with sweeping changes and significant increases. The contract was contested heatedly because it was something that the area had never seen before and there was even questions of some of the provisions even being legal within our state of North Dakota. They did make adjustments to make the contract more in line with what is common here but there still were some significant challenges. One was to increase rent and not have it rounded to an even dollar amount. In their contract they have written in the rent must be paid in full or they will start the eviction process. If a renter paid \$425.00 and the ever changing amount was \$425.12 one month and \$425.17 then next Havenpark would reject the check as the renter not paying in full and charge them a \$75 dollar latr fee for not paying on time. Now there is nothing illegal about this, but it is highly unethical.

Another is forcing renters to remove hitches versus putting a box over them. To reattach hitches is an expensive process that many cannot afford. Upon the sale of the manufactured home park many were looking to move their homes that they own elsewhere. By requiring the removal of hitches it made this a much larger task and opened the door for the new owner to take possession of homes because people were not able to pay for the increases being levied on them frequently. The hitches are part of the owner of the homes property. The owner of the land should not dictate anything to be changed on the structure of property they don't own unless it's specifically for a safety issue.

Outside of taking ownership of people's homes due to the leverage that they can really wield, The most unethical practice is in line with how they communicate to the residents. As I was advocating for the residents during the pandemic I was promised bybone of their corporate members (Chris), that Havenpark would communicate with the residents by the 17th of the month as to whether they would work with them in relation to rent due after many had either lost their jobs or were laid off. The date came and went and people were literally put in a position to where they had to either pay rent, groceries, or for medicine but could not pay for all three. The corporate office actually didn't answer until the last day of the month a little after 5:30 pm in the evening. This left people in a position where they paid their rent and gave up the other things because they were afraid of you of eviction as well as the high late payments. Again this is not illegal but it is certainly unethical and makes no community better.

The legislation in this bill (SB-2159) is a start, and should be passed. It should be a starting point and and more should come in order to address unethical business practices. It's unfortunate that these manufactured home companies could not just choose to do right by people as they go about their business but rather bully them as an effort to make them dependent with no options without losing their homes.

Sincerely  
Mike Connelly