

RE: North Dakota Century Code #47-16-07

Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee, my name is Connie Samuelson from Minot.

I am here to speak in favor of House Bill 1272:

As we are all aware, affordable houses are hard to find in ND thereby forcing many young adults and families to relying on rental units. We have more than 4000 apartment buildings and rental dwellings, housing: families, single parents, seniors, military personnel and college students.

Often the first taste of independence a young person experiences is moving out on their own. This involves signing a Lease and putting down a damage security deposit. NDCC 47-16-07.2 states that a landlord and tenant must sign a statement detailing condition of premises at the beginning of the Rental Agreement. This involves the tenant and property manager performing a move-in inspection by walking through the apartment together at an agreed upon time. Currently, there is no such required move-out inspection form when the lease is terminated. This results in move-out inspections being completed solely by the lessor or property manager. Unfortunately, by the time the lessee gets a Security Deposit Statement, the “repairs” have already been completed, thus providing the lessee no opportunity to prove they were charged for unwarranted, frivolous, or previously documented damages. Or even general improvements to the unit.

North Dakota is blessed with 11 public colleges and universities along with several military bases each full of young adults eager to get on with their careers. These young adults may not have the time, knowledge, or resources to dispute erroneous charges on their security deposits in Court. Many move out of state or even out of the country, so they are left with the clemency of State law.

Many of us have rented vehicles. Insurance companies strongly recommend their clients perform a walk-around with the dealer to assure the condition of the vehicle before taking it off the lot and again when returning it. These simple acts protect all involved.

Landlords and Tenants alike would appreciate House Bill 1272 and I hope you consider a “do pass” vote on this Bill.

Thank you,
Connie Samuelson