

My name is Maria Williams Kennedy and I'm a resident of Grand Forks, North Dakota.

I urge you to issue a "Do Pass" on HB1440.

This legislation would protect North Dakota renters from potential excessive late fees, eviction, and homelessness. This legislation is important to me because renters need protection from unreasonable and unscrupulous landlords who may prey on renters who have not been educated on their rights as a tenant. Homelessness in North Dakota is potentially very dangerous due to our frigid conditions. Some tenants with children could risk having their children removed from their custody if they cannot provide safe housing for their children through no fault of their own. It is crucial that renters are thoroughly educated to all of their rights as a tenant and should be protected by a mandatory signing of the explanation in front of the landlord and an agent for housing. I urge you to act on this legislation to protect those that often are denied a voice in our community: single or married Mothers and Fathers and even Grandparents who are trying very hard in the year of a pandemic to provide safe and affordable housing for their children. Children who are raised within stable homes are able to have a better success factor than children who are struggling with the stress of unsatisfactory and unstable living situations. Please allow them this legislation to help give aid to their need of a stable housing situation which will in turn allow them to focus on their academic future.