

Name: Nate Phillips

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Comment:

Please accept these comments in OPPOSITION TO The proposed amendment to MCR 4.201 (B) (3) (c). The proposed rule changes don't solve any problems. They only provide a menu of stall tactics which empower tenants to evade their contractual obligations and occupy properties rent free for months. Extending the time tenants can occupy spaces rent free applies un-necessary financial pressure on property owners specifically and on the housing industry in-general.

Central Detroit Christian is a non-profit community development corporation. CDC owns and manages approximately 150 rental units thru its wholly owned subsidiary Solid Rock Property Management. Well intentioned eviction prevention measures implemented early in the COVID-19 pandemic have since outlasted their usefulness and are now harming landlords and the housing industry. Tenants are refusing to pay rent because they are convinced that CERA or some other program will pick up their bill. If rental assistance programs can't cover their delinquency, they can rely on a court system that is congested, confused and delayed. In our experience, 40% of our portfolio stopped paying rent at some point in 2021. Non-paying tenants have on average, 9-10 months before a judgement is entered and another 2 months before a signed writ of eviction is issued. The combination of poorly managed rental assistance programs and the overwhelmed, inefficient landlord-tenant docket have led to an increased number of tenants who refuse to pay rent. The word is out. You can live rent free in Detroit for a year with little to no personal consequence.

Landlords cannot and should not be expected to cover the cost of this many delinquencies for this long. It's inevitable that rental rates will continue to increase and affordable housing across Michigan will disappear. Additionally, the units held up in the court process remain unavailable to those seeking quality affordable housing.