



Legislative Testimony
765 Asylum Avenue, 2nd Floor
Hartford, CT 06105
860-523-9146
www.acluct.org

**ACLU-CT Written Testimony Supporting House Bill 6666, An Act
Expanding Renters' Rights**

Senator Moore, Representative Luxenberg, Ranking Members Sampson and Scott,
and distinguished members of the Housing Committee:

My name is Jess Zaccagnino, and I am the policy counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT). I am writing to testify in support of House Bill 6666, An Act Expanding Renters' Rights.

All people in Connecticut have a right to safe, stable, and affordable housing. Under current law, landlords are required to return a security deposit within thirty days of vacating a property. But abnormally high security deposits, increasingly popular in today's difficult housing market, can have disastrous effects on the state's most financially vulnerable.¹ Many tenants simply do not have enough funds to pay for first month rent, last month rent, and a security deposit worth multiple months of rent. In a time when housing is increasingly competitive and scarce, this could mean the difference between securing housing and experiencing homelessness. Eleven states, including Massachusetts and Rhode Island, Washington D.C., and New York City have capped security deposits at one month's rent.² Additional states cap security deposits at one and a half months.³ The ACLU-CT supports House Bill 6666 and urges this Committee to do the same.

¹ See, e.g., Alex Williamson, *Security Deposits Are a Barrier to Affordable Housing. What Can Be Done?*, SHELTERFORCE (June 1, 2021), <https://shelterforce.org/2021/06/01/security-deposits-are-a-barrier-to-affordable-housing-what-can-be-done/>; Camila Vallejo, *Rent Without a Hefty Security Deposit? An Alternative May be in Connecticut's Future*, NPR (Nov. 29, 2022), <https://www.ctpublic.org/news/2022-11-29/rent-without-a-hefty-security-deposit-an-alternative-may-be-in-connecticuts-future>.

² See, e.g., *Security Deposit Law*, IPROPERTYMANAGEMENT (accessed Feb. 22, 2023), <https://iproertymanagement.com/laws/security-deposits>.

³ *Id.*