



Fact Sheet Series for the 135th General Assembly

House Bill 143:

Enact the Ohio Safe Homes Act

Sponsors: Representative Grim

Current law:

Current Ohio landlord-tenant law is silent regarding exceptions for termination and the prohibition of retaliation from landlords against a tenant for termination due to a sexually-oriented offense.

If passed, this legislation would:

- Allow tenants who are victims of rape, attempted rape, domestic violence, dating violence, abuse, or a sexually oriented offense (“tenants”) to **terminate a rental agreement** or **change the locks on the premises** if:
 - A **qualifying protection order** is issued or approved for the protection of the tenant; or
 - The tenant has **reported** the alleged sexually-oriented offense to a **qualified 3rd party** (e.g. law enforcement, health care professional, victim advocate)
- **Prohibit landlords from taking retaliatory action** (eviction, increasing rent) against the tenant, if the tenant terminates the lease or changes the locks
 - Prohibits landlords from **disclosing the tenant's personal information** to the individual restricted from contacting the tenant per the QPO
 - Prohibit landlords from refusing to rent to individuals based on past or possible future incidences of sexually oriented offenses
 - **Authorizes a nonrefundable income tax credit** for a landlord whose tenant has terminated the tenant’s rental agreement pursuant to the bill
- Rental Termination
 - Requires tenants to provide landlords with the notification of termination, vacate the property within 30 days, and continue to pay rent until they vacate
- Allow tenants to **install new locks** but they must notify the landlord and provide the landlord with a key
- Permit tenants to **sue a landlord** who takes retaliatory action and recover any actual damages or reasonable attorney's fees

Why this bill is important:

The majority of all sexual assaults occur where the survivor lives. However, [80% of sexual assault survivors cannot relocate due to lacking funding and housing options](#). In turn, lack of housing or inadequate shelter also increases the risk of sexual violence. Survivors deserve access to safe housing wherein they feel physically, emotionally, and psychologically safe from violence.