

# Comment Report

HSB 43

A bill for an act relating to court records for residential forcible entry and detainer actions.(See HF 548.)

Subcommittee Members: Thomson, C.-CH, James, Meyer, A.

Date: 01/25/2023

Time: 12:00 PM

Location: RM 102, Sup. Ct. Consult

**Name:** Abbey Barrow

**Comment:** I want to express support of this bill as a step to help Iowans attain safe housing and prevent homelessness in our communities. In Iowa, there's currently no avenue or process in place to seal or expunge an eviction filing that is many years old or was made in error. This information will continue to be on Iowa Courts Online regardless of how many years ago the filing occurred. Having these filings on records creates barriers to future housing and employment for residents, specifically families, women with children, people with disabilities, and people of color who are overwhelmingly impacted by eviction filings. I encourage lawmakers to enact this bill so that residents are judged more fairly in the housing application process and able to access the safe homes they need and deserve.

**Name:** Hannah Nelsen

**Comment:** I would like to express my support for this bill. It is vital to have a process for removal of eviction filings, especially those filed in error or those not resulting in an eviction. These "scarlet letter" filings haunt families throughout their lives even though their financial or employment status may change, prohibiting them from procuring safe and affordable housing (particularly women with children, people of color, and those with disabilities). Especially following the global instability as a result of COVID19, many families may have had filings against them in order to obtain needed rental assistance through the American Rescue Plan. A process must be in place to seal or expunge these filings in order to keep our community housed.

**Name:** Courtney Guntly

**Comment:** I am the Iowa Balance of State Continuum of Care Director, representing 96 counties in Iowa (excluding Polk, Pottawattamie, and Woodbury). I am in support of this legislation, as I know that having an eviction on your record creates significant barriers to housing. Evictions contribute to the homeless population in Iowa; within the past month, an estimated 15% of those who accessed emergency housing services identified an eviction as a primary or secondary reason for their homelessness. Iowa currently has no process in place to seal or expunge an eviction filing that is old or has been made in error. A majority of eviction filings don't go to court or are rescinded, meaning an eviction will remain on your record and continue to be a possible deterrent to housing when applying for future housing opportunities. As eviction filings overwhelmingly affect women with children, people with disabilities, and people of color, this act would make progress in helping these populations to maintain safe housing. I urge you to support this legislation.

**Name:** Bridgett Robinson

**Comment:** I wanted to express my support of this bill for many different reasons. As you have probably heard from many others, there are a lot of people that fall under the disabled, people of color and single moms that will suffer greatly if this bill is not passed. Having an eviction on your record without your knowledge or in error can be

very detrimental to the future of a lot. This could obviously cause them to potentially not secure other housing options because of the existence of the eviction on their record. There is already heavy discrimination in housing on these particular individuals as it is but with an eviction, it makes it much worse. How are we as a state going to be champions in getting our families and individuals off of the street, if they are getting removed from their homes under circumstances out of their control?