



February 28, 2024

The Honorable Patrick McHenry
Chairman
House Financial Services Committee
2129 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Maxine Waters
Ranking Member
House Financial Services Committee
4340 O'Neill House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman McHenry, Ranking Member Waters and members of the House Financial Services Committee:

The undersigned national associations represent for-profit and non-profit owners, operators, developers, lenders and property managers and housing cooperatives involved in the provision of rental housing, both affordable and conventional. We are writing to urge the House Financial Services Committee (HFSC) to pass H.R. 802, the Respect State Housing Laws Act, in the full Committee markup on February 29, 2024. Doing this would be an important step closer to the end of lingering operational challenges that the rental housing industry is experiencing from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020.

As background, the CARES Act established a temporary 120-day moratorium on evictions due to nonpayment of rent, applicable to federally-backed and federally-assisted housing. This section of the CARES Act also instituted what should have been a temporary notice procedure, requiring housing providers to notify covered residents 30 days before filing for eviction after the moratorium ended on July 24, 2020. This temporary federal "notice-to-vacate" requirement remains a hotly contested issue in courts today, long after the moratorium and the federal COVID-19 public health emergency has ended. It adds complexity and confusion to the eviction process established by states and further delays the start of the eviction process for housing providers who have been waiting to have their cases heard in court while rent remains unpaid.

Backlogs in the courts are stretching from weeks or months to more than a year in some jurisdictions. Meanwhile, owners and managers face even more lost rent while they wait. This is particularly financially challenging for operators of subsidized housing and mom and pop landlords and ultimately hurts the tens

of millions of Americans who work in the industry as well as the nation's renters. For professional owners and operators of rental housing, eviction is a last resort. Their businesses always do better when units are occupied and when they can fully meet their obligations to their residents, employees, creditors and the communities that they serve.

Throughout the pandemic, rental housing professionals have worked to both help our residents resolve their hardships and to advance policies to provide renters with essential resources to meet their housing needs. Now that Congress and the President have terminated the federal COVID-19 public health emergency, we urge the HFSC to pass H.R. 802, the Respect State Housing Laws Act, during the full Committee markup on February 29, 2024. Congress must return eviction policies back to the state and local level. We stand ready to work with you to facilitate passage of this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Council for Affordable and Rural Housing

Institute of Real Estate Management

Manufactured Housing Institute

National Affordable Housing Management Association

National Apartment Association

National Association of Home Builders

National Association of Housing Cooperatives

National Association of Realtors

National Association of Residential Property Managers

National Leased Housing Association

National Multifamily Housing Council

CC: Members of the House Financial Services Committee