



HB 65 Housing Modernization Changes

Sponsors: Reps. Andrea Romero, Kristina Ortez, Angelica Rubio

Summary

HB 65 would modernize New Mexico's housing code by improving the balance between the rights of landlords and the rights of tenants so that families who can't pay rent and comply with their lease are not immediately evicted. Since the start of the COVID pandemic, the state has provided over \$70 million in rental and utility subsidies and still has not met the need. This kind of housing reform is needed more than ever due to the pandemic.

History

Rep. Romero introduced a similar bill, HB 111 Housing Discrimination Changes, in the 2021 Session. It passed through two House committees and on the House Floor by a vote of 42:25, but it then stalled in the Senate and died.

Why HB 65 is Good For New Mexico

This bill will help prevent evictions and homelessness when tenants can't pay rent on time. Tenants who are currently behind on rent have little time to catch up before an eviction is filed. Then they must prepare for court and find new housing, if evicted. According to a U.S. Census Survey published in November 2021, 21.5% of New Mexico parents have lost their jobs due to childcare issues during the pandemic, almost 7 times the national average of just 3.2%. NM has some of the shortest eviction time frames in the U.S. We need to help our vulnerable families, not punish them!

The bill would:

1. Expand time frames to allow tenants:
 - 11 days instead of 3 days to get current on rent after written notice from owner;
 - 21 days instead of 3 days to prepare for court;
 - 20 days instead of 7 days to secure new housing and move out if evicted;
 - additional time to move at the court's discretion.
2. Require court summons to explain tenants' rights and availability of rental assistance.
3. Prevent landlords from refusing to renew a lease during a declared state of emergency.
4. Align the time frame for an appeal with the eviction deadlines.

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