

**House Judiciary**

**03/05/2025 01:30 PM**

**HB25-1235 Jury Trials for Tenant Proceedings**

**Typed Text of Testimony Submitted**

<b>Name, Position, Representing</b>	<b>Typed Text of Testimony</b>
Dolores Williams Against themselves	<p>Evictions are already costly, with the average cost ranging from \$300-\$600 (or more), but that will skyrocket under this bill to an estimated average of \$4000-\$7000 to the losing party. Focus on the extended timeline for evictions: currently an eviction takes a minimum of 4-6 weeks, not including the time required by the demand letter. This will extend that timeline as well, with the time required to schedule a court room large enough for a jury, go through the jury selection process, and proceed through the actual jury hearing. This is a bad thing for renters, for property owners, and for the rental industry as a whole.</p> <p>Rentals are less desirable to investors due to higher insurance, property tax, and repairs. Evictions should be unnecessary but for State interference. If renters take care of my property and pay the rent, I would happily renew a lease for a reasonable inflation adjustment!</p>
Jack Regenbogen For Colorado Poverty Law Project	<p>Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee,</p> <p>My name is Jack Regenbogen, and I am the Deputy Executive Director of Colorado Poverty Law Project. We are a nonprofit that works to prevent homelessness through free legal assistance, education, and advocacy. I am writing in strong support of HB25-1235, which expands the right to jury trials in eviction proceedings.</p> <p>While it is likely that most tenants will rarely elect for jury trials, in cases with complex fact patterns, this right is critical to ensuring due process and fair outcomes.</p> <p>Eviction proceedings often move quickly, and while many cases may involve straightforward nonpayment of rent, others present more nuanced legal and factual disputes. These cases may involve issues such as landlord retaliation, uninhabitable living conditions, or disputes over lease terms. In such situations, the ability to have a jury of peers weigh the evidence and credibility of both parties is essential. Juries serve as a crucial safeguard against unjust outcomes, particularly in cases where power imbalances or conflicting narratives make the facts difficult to parse.</p> <p>Opponents of this legislation may argue that allowing jury trials will create unnecessary burdens on the court system. However, the reality is that jury trials will be requested only in the most complex cases where they are truly necessary. The vast</p>

	<p>majority of eviction cases will still proceed through bench trials, just as they do now. But in those rare instances where a jury trial is the only way to ensure a fair hearing, tenants should not be denied this fundamental right. The potential for a jury trial also incentivizes fairness in the legal process, ensuring that all parties approach litigation with greater diligence and care.</p> <p>Due process should not be contingent on the type of case before the court. If our legal system recognizes the importance of jury trials in civil disputes over property, contracts, and financial matters, then it must also afford this right in cases where a person’s home is at stake. Housing stability is critical to the well-being of individuals, families, and communities, and the right to a jury trial in eviction cases ensures that justice is served when the facts are most contested.</p> <p>For these reasons, we urge you to support HB25-1235 and uphold the fundamental principles of fairness and due process in our courts. Thank you.</p> <p>Jack Regenbogen, Esq.</p>
<p>Spencer Abeyta Against themselves</p>	<p>Oppose HB25-1235 3/5/2025</p> <p>My name is Spencer Abeyta and I am a property manager and rental property owner in Colorado Springs. I am testifying that HB25-1235 will cause extra undue burden to a landlord when a tenant is not paying rent and it will add additional strain to the already overworked court system.</p> <p>If a tenant who has not paid rent is allowed a jury trial for this will delay the eviction process and cause undue financial harm to the property owner. The property owner will still have to pay a mortgage, property taxes, and property insurance costs even if the resident is not paying rent as agreed in the rental lease. The courts do not have the capacity to schedule a jury trial quickly and this can extend the time to a final judgment for weeks if not months. All the while the judgment is delayed, the property owner is still incurring costs for the property. This is just a way to extend the time that a resident can live in a property at the expense of someone else. There will be additional costs incurred by both parties for a jury trial which makes the eviction process more costly still. If a resident is being evicted for non-payment it doesn’t seem feasible that they would be able to pay the costs needed with the jury trial. The increased cost to the property owner will increase the risk of owning a rental property. The property owner will have to decide how to combat the increased risk or weigh the options of selling the property. I strongly oppose this bill and I believe it will only act to cause financial harm to mom and pop property owners and property managers like myself.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and your consideration on these matters is very much appreciated.</p>

<p>Aaron Blazis Against Colorado Housing Coalition</p>	<p>I want to thank the committee for allowing me to testify today. My name is Aaron Blazis with the Colorado Housing Coalition. We are a statewide coalition of rental housing providers, representing housing providers and managers in every community throughout Colorado. Our typical client has one home in their portfolio, has a mortgage, and offers essential housing for individuals and working families. I am a property manager with Premier Real Estate group in Colorado Springs and own one townhouse myself.</p> <p>I am extremely concerned about what this bill would do to the housing industry. When I sit with a new family considering renting out their home, we talk through worst case scenarios including evictions. I tell them that most of the time, evictions happen because a tenant stops paying rent. I then tell them it currently takes 2-3 months to go through the eviction process, during which they can expect to be paying their mortgage without any rent coming in. I work to calm their fears by stating that we have evictions on less than 1% of our properties annually. If this bill passes, in addition to it taking much longer, I will have to tell these families that they can expect legal costs of \$5,000 or more simply to prove that a tenant is not paying rent.</p> <p>In addition to harming my clients, this bill would have devastating consequences to tenants who lose in court. Since almost all eviction trials involve a tenant not paying, when landlords win, they are awarded both court and attorney's costs. I have two evictions going on right now where the rent owed is over \$4000 and if the increased court costs incurred by a jury trial was added to this, it would make a debt virtually impossible for the tenant to repay.</p> <p>Finally, with every bill like this that passes, I lose clients. I have had multiple conversations just this week with clients that are stopping doing business in Colorado. The pinch of inflation, drastically increasing insurance, and huge new risks from unbalanced legislation are making it so they are no longer willing to be a housing provider in Colorado. I urge you to vote no on HB25-1235.</p>
<p>Mary Reid Against Reid and Associates, LLC</p>	<p>I am a landlord and property owner of 40 multi-family units and I serve mostly low-income tenants. Some of my tenants are Section 8. I choose to work with this tenant population because I believe I provide safe, habitable housing at an affordable price, allowing this tenant population to access housing. This will be threatened if this bill passes. I am firmly against this bill because landlords/owners will be forced to contend with longer vacancy periods, increased compliance responsibilities, and potential losses in rental income stemming from extended dispute resolution processes. Landlords/owners will be forced to allow non-paying tenants to remain in their unit for an extended and unfair period of time waiting on a jury trial, WITHOUT THE TENANT PAYING RENT. THIS PLACES AN UNDUE BURDEN ON OWNERS AND LANDLORDS. THEY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO RECOVER FINANCIALLY. Specifically, this bill results in landlords/owners experiencing extreme financial losses, forcing them to go without payment for an extended period of time from tenants. This directly</p>

	<p>impacts the landlord/owner's ability to maintain properties and will impact habitability because they will no longer be able to afford to maintain their units. Ultimately, this will cause landlords/owners to sell affordable housing units and invest in other states that are more landlord-friendly or invest in other types of investments that carry smaller risks. Small and medium-sized landlords will be largely impacted, and will not be able to continue owning their buildings or houses. In fact, I personally am seeking to sell my properties because Colorado has placed burdensome laws on my business in the past three years. Once landlords'/owners' properties are sold, the supply of rental homes and affordable housing will decrease, making rents for remaining units increase. The state's affordable housing and overall availability of housing will be significantly reduced. PLEASE VOTE NO ON THIS BILL.</p>
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