
Housing Committee

HB 2450

Brief Description: Paying for background information checks performed by landlords and charged to tenants.

Sponsors: Representatives Miloscia and Hasegawa.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires landlords to produce proof of their costs in obtaining information for the purpose of tenant screening.

Hearing Date: 1/17/06

Staff: Robyn Dupuis (786-7166).

Background:

If a landlord conducts background checks to screen tenants, the Residential Landlord Tenant Act mandates that the landlord may only charge a tenant the actual cost incurred using a tenant screening service, or the landlord's own actual costs in obtaining the information (up to the customary cost charged by a screening service in the general area). Allowable landlord costs include those associated with long distance phone calls, and for time spent calling previous landlords, employers, and financial institutions.

Landlords are subject to a fee, not to exceed \$100, payable to the tenant for violation of this section.

Summary of Bill:

If a landlord conducts and charges tenants for his or her own screening of tenants, allowable costs are limited to those associated with long distance phone calls and facsimiles as well as any fees or other charges required to obtain background information.

Landlords must provide proof of screening costs that are charged to a tenant, upon the tenant request. Documents provided as proof must specifically reference tenant unique identifiers including the tenant's name and social security number or date of birth.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.