

Friday, May 5, 2023

Assemblywoman Elaine Marzola, Chair  
Assemblywoman Sandra Jauregui, Vice Chair  
Members of the Assembly Commerce & Labor Committee

Thank you Chair Marzola and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ben Iness and I am the coalition coordinator for the Nevada Housing Justice Alliance (NHJA). The NHJA writes in support of Senate Bill 381 to protect tenants from surprise maintenance fees they are not responsible for.

The NHJA is a coalition of grassroots organizers and community advocates who work directly with Nevada tenants to develop solutions and advocate for community investments that solve the root causes of housing insecurity. Our work is based on the belief that housing is a human right, and that home serves a higher purpose than just shelter.

Nevada tenants make up over 40% of Nevada's population and have been experiencing the worst of our state's housing crisis for years on end. Unprecedented rent increases paired with the greatest shortage of affordable housing in the nation for Nevada's most vulnerable renters means that tenants are often forced to pay high proportions of their income on rent alone. In this position, tenants and families are forced to make difficult choices between food, healthcare, and keeping a roof over their head.

Tenants need transparency and consistency in knowing what their rent costs will be. This applies especially to maintenance and repairs that landlords are required by law to conduct for habitability. Tenants should never foot the bill for costs like these if they are not at fault for. Countless Nevadans are one small step away from crisis and eviction, and burdensome, unnecessary costs like these fees add to those tensions. It's time to set the precedent that Nevada protects its tenants, lifting the floor for all and sealing the gaps so no one ever has to slip through the cracks.

The NHJA urges the committee to support and pass SB381.

Thank you,

## **Nevada Housing Justice Alliance**

ACLU of Nevada

Battleborn Progress

Care In Action

Children's Advocacy Alliance

Culinary Union 226

Faith In Action Nevada

For Our Future Nevada

Las Vegas DSA

Make It Work Nevada

Make The Road Nevada

Nevada Homeless Alliance

Northern Nevada DSA

Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada

Reno Initiative for Shelter & Equality