

S.B. 200 (File 71) -- Reduce the unfair use of eviction records.

Tenants are often screened out of future rental housing just because an eviction case was started -- even if they won the case or if the case was withdrawn.

- All it takes is a name. The mere existence of a tenant's name in a court eviction record is often used as a filter to eliminate an applicant from consideration for an apartment without any further examination. The impact on a tenant's finding decent housing – sometimes on finding any housing -- can be severe.
- Many cases are resolved without a judgment for the landlord. They may be withdrawn or dismissed, or the tenant may win. But the tenant still has a record, the existence of which can block their applications. Withdrawing the case doesn't clear the tenant's record – it stays on the Judicial website for one year. If the tenant actually has a trial and wins the case, it stays on even longer -- for three years! And even when it is removed from the website, it is not removed from the database sold to the companies from which landlords purchase applicant reviews. It can be reported for seven years.
- Fault doesn't matter. Landlords often don't distinguish between evictions based on fault (e.g., non-payment or nuisance) and **no-fault evictions** (e.g., expiration of lease). In a no-fault eviction, the landlord doesn't even claim that the tenant has done anything wrong. All judgments for the landlord, for any reason, are on the website for three years and accessible to data buyers for up to seven years
- In practice, this type of screening has a disparate impact on households headed by women, especially women of color, because they are disproportionately defendants in eviction cases. African-American families in Connecticut are subject to eviction over three times more than white families and Hispanic/Latinx families over two times more. The improper use of eviction records contributes to racial segregation.

S.B. 200 limits these adverse impacts in two ways.

- **It reduces the time that eviction records remain on the Judicial website.**
 - If there is no judgment for the landlord, it removes them from the website within 30 days after disposition of the case. This applies to judgments for the tenant, withdrawals, dismissals, and nonsuits.
 - If the judgment is for the landlord, it limits its time on the website to 1 year.
- **It requires that cases, once removed, not knowingly be reported by credit bureaus, tenant screening services, and similar commercial entities.**