

March 18, 2019

HEALTHY HOUSING ADVOCACY NEEDED TODAY: HB 346 IS STUCK!

We were thrilled when [HB 346](#) overwhelmingly passed the House. But now, the Bill is stuck in the Senate. We need a hearing and a vote in the [Senate Judiciary Committee](#) as soon as possible. Please raise your voices to move the bill forward!

Please contact your Senator and urge them to VOTE YES on [HB 346](#). HB 346 would allow tenants in unhealthy and unsafe rental homes and apartments to complain to code enforcement and secure needed repairs without being evicted.

Advocacy partners in the Healthy Housing Georgia coalition include the Georgia Municipal Association, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Voices for Georgia's Children, United Way of Atlanta, Greater Atlanta Community Foundation, Academy of Pediatricians, Georgians for a Healthy Future, Georgia Appleseed, Georgia ACT, Georgians for a Healthy Future, Presbyterians for a Better Georgia, Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation, Statewide Independent Living Council, and many others.

Recent news stories highlight this problem and the need for HB 346:

CBS 46 News: Residents complain about code violations and face retaliatory eviction – Watch [HERE](#)

AJC Metro: Tenants facing retaliatory evictions in Cobb for calling code enforcement – Read [HERE](#)

ACTION NEEDED TODAY:

- **Contact your Senator Today and urge them to vote YES on HB 346.**
 - To find out who your Senator is (the upper chamber) go to https://openstates.org/find_your_legislator/ and enter your home address. When you click on their name it will provide you with their phone and email address at the capitol. **Please call or email today! Tell them you are a constituent. Calling works best!**

- **Contact these members of the Senate Judiciary Committee and urge them to vote YES on HB 346.**

Calling works best!

 - **Bill Cowsert (Athens)** bill.cowsert@senate.ga.gov or (404) 463-1366
 - **Blake Tillery (Vidalia)** blake.tillery@senate.ga.gov or (404) 656-0089
 - **John F. Kennedy (Macon)** john.kennedy@senate.ga.gov or (404) 656-0045
 - **William T. Ligon, Jr. (Brunswick)** william.ligon@senate.ga.gov or (404) 463-1383
 - **Brian Strickland (McDonough)** brian.strickland@senate.ga.gov or (404) 656-7454
 - **Bill Heath (Bremen)** bill.heath@senate.ga.gov or (404) 656-3943

Talking Points:

HB 346 seeks to protect families living in rental homes facing mold, leaking roofs, rats, insect infestations, lead, radon, and unsafe electrical and other conditions when they exercise their right to seek repairs and complain to code enforcement. These conditions are forcing children and vulnerable adults into the emergency rooms and hospitals across the state in high numbers. Georgia is the only state in the country that does not protect tenants against unsafe and uninhabitable housing conditions with a "warranty of habitability."

HB 346 would allow Georgia to join 41 other states (including FL, TN, TX, AL, NC, SC, MS VA, etc.) that prohibit landlords from retaliating against tenants with evictions merely for seeking repairs for unhealthy and unsafe housing.

Georgia has some of the highest eviction rates in the country. After eviction families have an even harder time finding a place to live, children are forced to change schools, and families are forced into less stable and less desirable housing.

The Bill that passed the House was carefully negotiated with the Georgia Apartment Association and Georgia Realtors Association to address their objections, while retaining the purposes of the Bill. Their objections have been addressed and they have withdrawn their opposition to the Bill. Now new opposition has arisen from the Georgia Affordable Housing Coalition and we are striving to meet their demands and move the bill while protecting its central purpose.

Thank you for raising your voice today!