

2023 -- S 0914

LC000741

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

A N A C T

RELATING TO PROPERTY -- RESIDENTIAL LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT

Introduced By: Senator Tiara T. Mack

Date Introduced: March 30, 2023

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 34-18 of the General Laws entitled "Residential Landlord and Tenant
2 Act" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **34-18-58. Rent stabilization act.**

4 (a) During any private rental tenancy, the landlord shall not increase the rent:

5 (1) During the first year after the tenancy begins;

6 (2) At any time after the first year of the tenancy without giving the tenant written notice
7 in accordance with § 34-18-16.1; and

8 (3) During any twelve (12) month period, in an amount greater than four percent (4%).

9 (b) The written notice required under this section shall specify:

10 (1) The amount of the rent increase;

11 (2) The amount of the new rent;

12 (3) Facts supporting the exemption, if the increase is more than the amount allowed in
13 subsection (a)(3) of this section; and

14 (4) The date on which the increase becomes effective.

15 (c) A landlord terminating a tenancy with a thirty (30) day notice without cause as
16 authorized by § 34-18-37, shall not reset the rent for the next tenancy in an amount greater than
17 four percent (4%) above the previous rent.

18 (d) A landlord refusing to extend the tenancy at the request of the tenant, shall not reset the
19 rent for the next tenancy in an amount greater than four percent (4%) above the previous rent.

- 1 (e) A landlord is not subject to the provisions of this section when:
2 (1) The tenant leaves on their own volition and the landlord rents to a new tenant; or
3 (2) The landlord is providing reduced rent to the tenant as part of a federal, state or local
4 program or subsidy.
- 5 (f) A landlord that increases rent in violation of this section or a landlord which wrongfully
6 evicts a tenant shall be liable to the tenant in an amount equal to three (3) months' rent in addition
7 to actual damages sustained by the tenant as a result of the tenancy termination.
- 8 (g) A tenant is entitled to recovery under this section if the tenant commences an action
9 asserting the claim within one year after the tenant knew or should have known the landlord
10 terminated the tenancy in violation of this section.
- 11 (h) This section does not create a right to increase rent that does not otherwise exist.
- 12 (i) This section does not require a landlord to compromise, justify or reduce a rent increase
13 that the landlord otherwise is entitled to impose.
- 14 (j) The secretary of housing shall enforce the provisions of this section.
- 15 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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RELATING TO PROPERTY -- RESIDENTIAL LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT

1 This act would limit rent increases to no more than four percent (4%) annually and would
2 provide tenants with a civil action to recover damages for any violations.

3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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