

From: J Olson <olsonapartments@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2024 10:06 PM
To: Trane, Andrea <tranea@cityoflacrosse.org>
Cc: Acklin, Tim <Acklint@cityoflacrosse.org>
Subject: Legistar item 23-1489

Dear Planner Trane,

I am not sure which staff member is assigned to the Human Rights Committee, so I hope you will forward my brief comment.

If the City were to enact a provision amending local fair housing laws to include homelessness status as a protected class, the response from landlords would likely be to rely on income minimums and credit score as a surrogate to filtering out tenants with poor prospects of being successful tenants.

It feels very misguided (much like the disturbing experience I had having to deal with a misleading attorney from Wisconsin Legal Action and two tenant advocates in the room during mediation making it a 4 vs. 1 (me being the 1) scenario with my formerly homeless tenant). I have to wonder if going down this road of trying to make it illegal to require current landlord references, even if it is determined by the legal department to be somehow lawful under state law, may wind up hurting the people it's supposed to help. Especially if the impact will be a larger application fee to enable the landlord to run a credit report as a standard surrogate screening method. I think it is a lost cause to try to evade landlord screening as a solution to the current problems plaguing our community. Even if you manage to place someone in private housing, the first instance of problems will result in eviction action by the landlord. Two strikes and you're out.

You cannot force anyone into a long-term relationship with someone who is an unwilling partner.

Jessica