

Representative xxxxxx/Senator xxxxxxxx
PO Box xxx
Madison, WI 53xxx

March 30, 2007

Dear Representative/Senator XXX:

As the [mention your title and affiliation if you work in sexual assault related field; i.e.: *as the Policy Specialist for the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault*], I am writing to urge you to co-sponsor Senate LRB 2269 and Assembly LRB 3020, known as the "Safe Housing Act." The bill allows victims of sexual assault, domestic violence and stalking to secure safe housing by canceling their current lease if they provide legal documentation of their victim status and notice to their landlord. The bill also prevents municipalities from charging landlords a fee for emergency services and voids lease provisions that restrict a tenant's ability to access emergency services.

This bill will help victims escape violence and prevent crime. Violent perpetrators target victims they know are not in a position to easily escape abuse. Many victims are currently unable to move because the cost of breaking a lease is too expensive. We should not force victims of violent crimes to choose between their safety and financial ruin.

This bill also promotes community safety by prohibiting leases that penalize a tenant for accessing emergency services. These barriers should be removed so that victims do not have to continue to live in fear and suffer abuse. All Wisconsin citizens should be able to report criminal activity and access police protection without financial penalty.

This bill provides adequate protections to victims without placing an undue burden on landlords. The lease canceling provision will only be available to persons who are in imminent danger. The bill requires formal documentation, such as a criminal complaint or a no contact, for a victim to break a lease.

Wisconsin should follow the lead of at least nine other states that have passed similar legislation. Please help victims of sexual assault, domestic violence and stalking escape abuse and ensure that everyone in Wisconsin has a safe place to live by co-sponsoring the Safe Housing Act. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Name
Title
Organization
Address (so they know you are a constituent)