

## **Support HF 547 – Early Lease Termination**

Please support HF 547, allowing violent crime victims (domestic abuse, sexual abuse, stalking and elder abuse) to terminate a lease early if they provide landlords written notice and documentation of harm.

This bill reduces a major economic barrier to seeking safety, enables victims to remain in good standing with landlords and avoid an eviction record, which gives survivors a better chance at escaping violence and economic hardship in the future. Currently, 32 states have adopted this sensible policy.

Leaving a violent relationship is the most dangerous time for most survivors but the economic reality of escaping violence often forces decisions about seeking safety. Without early lease termination, the options are not good. Enabling survivors to avoid eviction at this critical point is key and can mean the difference between a lifetime of economic hardship and a future free from violence.

Victims who leave are frequently evicted for nonpayment of rent because they are unable to continue paying rent for the remainder of a lease for a home they can no longer safely stay. Having an eviction record limits access to housing and that makes it harder to stay employed and keep children in school.

Alternatively, many victims remain trapped in dangerous relationships because they cannot afford to pay out the remainder of their lease AND they cannot afford to have an eviction record. Being homeless is often riskier than staying.

This bill reduces a major barrier to seeking safety for victims of violence and offers survivors a better chance at finding stable housing, economic security, and a violent free future. Please support HF 547.