

JAN 17 2025

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE RESIDENTIAL LANDLORD-TENANT CODE.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1       SECTION 1. The legislature finds that residential tenants  
2 may be vulnerable to landlords who violate the State's  
3 residential landlord-tenant code. Tenants who have been  
4 subjected to unfair or unlawful treatment may find themselves  
5 unable to protect their rights without initiating expensive  
6 lawsuits.

7       Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to provide more  
8 legal protections for residential tenants by allowing tenants  
9 who prevail in a lawsuit for a violation of the residential  
10 landlord-tenant code to be awarded damages, reasonable  
11 attorney's fees, and costs of the suit.

12       SECTION 2. Chapter 521, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
13 amended by adding a new section to part VI to be appropriately  
14 designated and to read as follows:

15       "§521-       Amount of recovery. Except as otherwise  
16 provided in this chapter and notwithstanding any other law to  
17 the contrary, any tenant who is directly affected by a violation



1 of this chapter may sue for damages, and if the judgment is for  
2 the plaintiff, the plaintiff shall be awarded:

- 3       (1) A sum of no less than \$1,000, or threefold the  
4             plaintiff's sustained damages, whichever is greater;  
5       (2) Reasonable attorney's fees; and  
6       (3) The costs of the suit."

7       SECTION 3. This Act does not affect rights and duties that  
8 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were  
9 begun before its effective date.

10       SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

11       SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

12  
INTRODUCED BY:





# S.B. NO. 83/

**Report Title:**

Residential Landlord-tenant Code; Damages; Attorney's Fees

**Description:**

Allows tenants who prevail in a lawsuit for a violation of the Residential Landlord-Tenant Code to be awarded damages, reasonable attorney's fees, and costs of the suit.

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