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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 Hawaii faces a  
2 severe housing crisis, and that approximately fifty-six per cent  
3 of the renters in the State are rent burdened, meaning over  
4 thirty per cent of their income is dedicated to paying their  
5 rent. Many of these households are increasingly vulnerable to  
6 housing cost-burden, insecurity, and displacement.

7           The legislature further finds that federal and state laws  
8 afford tenants certain protections and rights, including but not  
9 limited to laws that:

- 10           (1) Safeguard public health, safety, and welfare by  
11                setting forth minimum dwelling unit standards;
- 12           (2) Establish rights and responsibilities of tenants and  
13                landlords;
- 14           (3) Establish processes related to residential evictions;  
15                and
- 16           (4) Protect tenants from discrimination based on certain  
17                classifications.



1           The legislature also finds that landlord-tenant laws are  
2 self-help laws that put the onus on renters to access their  
3 rights through private action. This often presents major  
4 barriers to justice for tenants who are often already  
5 overwhelmed, under-resourced, and fearful of retaliation.  
6 Without legal expertise, many renters may struggle to understand  
7 and access their rights as articulated in their lease agreements  
8 and under the Residential Landlord-Tenant Code.

9           The legislature believes that providing accessible and  
10 accurate information to tenants concerning existing laws that  
11 protect tenants, the rights afforded under such laws, and the  
12 resources available to assist tenants will enable renters to  
13 address certain challenges and potentially assist them to avoid  
14 eviction and homelessness. The legislature further believes  
15 that promoting access to accurate information will also improve  
16 housing stability across the State.

17           Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 18           (1) Require the office of consumer protection to  
19                 periodically publish an accessible, multilingual  
20                 notice of tenant rights; and



1 (2) Require a landlord to provide a tenant with the most  
2 recent notice of tenant rights in the tenant's  
3 preferred language, if available, upon the signing of  
4 a lease.

5 SECTION 2. Chapter 521, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
6 amended by adding a new section to part I to be appropriately  
7 designated and to read as follows:

8 "§521-A Notice of tenant rights; publication. (a) The  
9 office of consumer protection shall develop, maintain, and  
10 periodically publish a notice of tenant rights that summarizes  
11 the rights of tenants under this chapter and any other  
12 applicable federal or state law. The notice of tenant rights  
13 shall be made available as a standalone document and included in  
14 the informational handbook on this chapter that is maintained by  
15 the office of consumer protection.

16 (b) The notice of tenant rights shall at a minimum be:

17 (1) Made available in printed and electronic formats;

18 (2) Translated into the most commonly spoken languages in  
19 the State, as determined by the office of consumer  
20 protection, in consultation with the office of

21 language access; and



1       (3) Accessible to individuals with disabilities, including  
2       compliance with applicable accessibility standards for  
3       electronic documents.

4       (c) The office of consumer protection shall review and  
5       update the notice of tenant rights no less than once every year,  
6       or sooner as necessary to reflect changes in the applicable  
7       law."

8           SECTION 3. Chapter 521, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
9       amended by adding a new section to part IV to be appropriately  
10      designated and to read as follows:

11           "**§521-B Notice of tenant rights; disclosure.** (a) A  
12      landlord shall provide a tenant with a copy of the most recently  
13      issued notice of tenant rights, either physically or digitally,  
14      published by the office of consumer protection pursuant to  
15      section 521-A at or before the time the tenant signs a written  
16      rental agreement. The landlord shall provide the copy in the  
17      tenant's preferred language, if the notice is available in that  
18      preferred language from the office of consumer protection.

19           (b) A landlord who fails to comply with this section shall  
20      be subject to a fine of no more than \$ \_\_\_\_\_."



1           SECTION 4. In codifying the new sections added by sections  
2 2 and 3 of this Act, the revisor of statutes shall substitute  
3 appropriate section numbers for the letters used in designating  
4 the new sections in this Act.

5           SECTION 5. This Act does not affect rights and duties that  
6 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were  
7 begun before its effective date.

8           SECTION 6. New statutory material is underscored.

9           SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



**Report Title:**

Office of Consumer Protection; Residential Landlord-Tenant Code;  
Notice of Tenant Rights; Landlord Obligations; Fines

**Description:**

Requires the Office of Consumer Protection to periodically publish an accessible, multilingual notice of tenant rights. Requires the notice to be included in the informational handbook on the Residential Landlord-Tenant Code maintained by the Office. Requires a landlord to provide a tenant with a copy of the most recent notice of tenant rights in the tenant's preferred language, if available, and subjects the landlord to a fine for failure to do so. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

