

ENSURING TENANT PROTECTIONS AND RENTAL HOUSING QUALITY



Sarah Gallagher, Senior Project Director, National Low Income Housing Coalition

Jaime Kinder, Mayor, Meadville, PA

Eileen Cipriani, City Business Administrator, Scranton PA

Derek Slaughter, Mayor, Williamsport, PA

Moderator: Nikylan Knapper, Mayor, Maplewood, MO

SUMMER
2023

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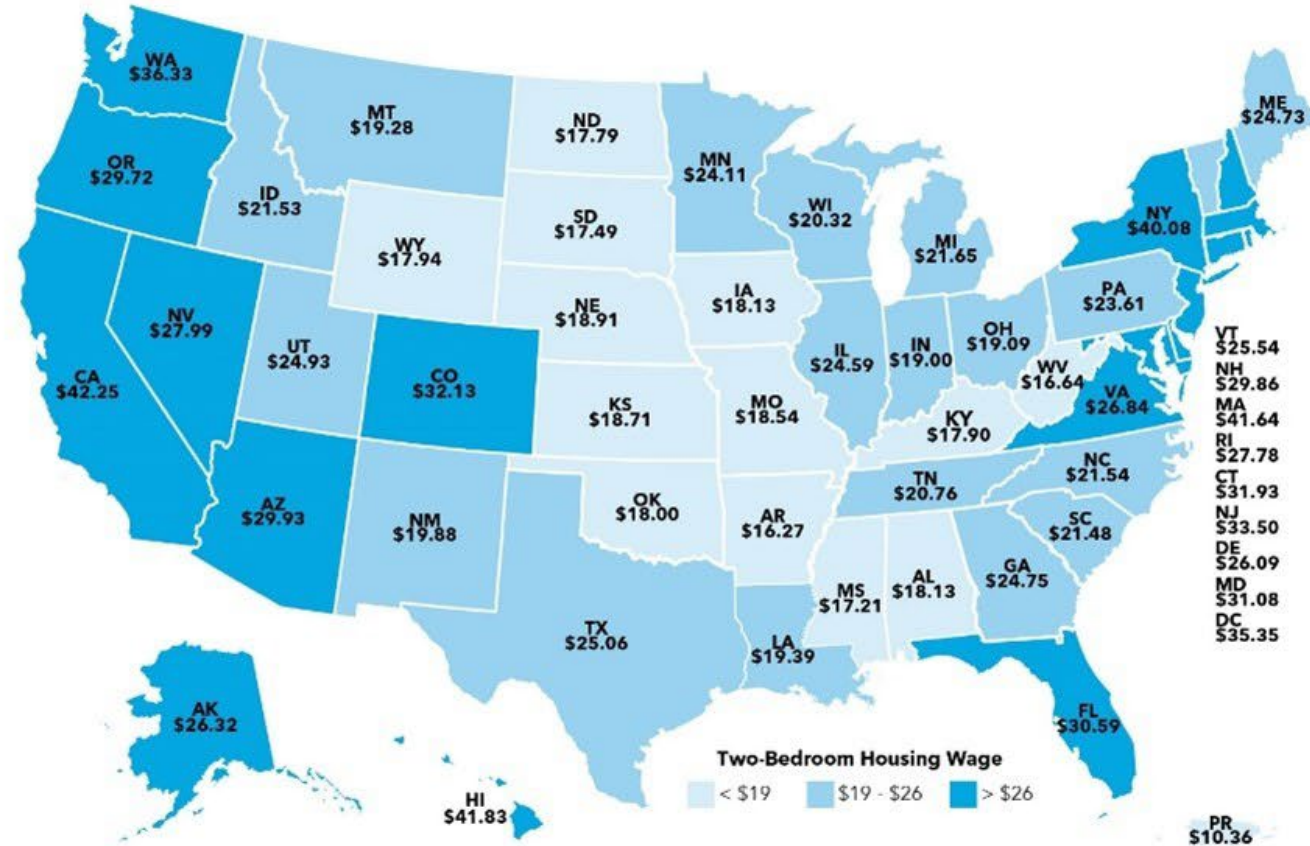
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The Role of Tenant Protections in Supporting Housing Stability and Quality

Sarah Gallagher
Senior Director



2023 TWO-BEDROOM RENTAL HOUSING WAGES

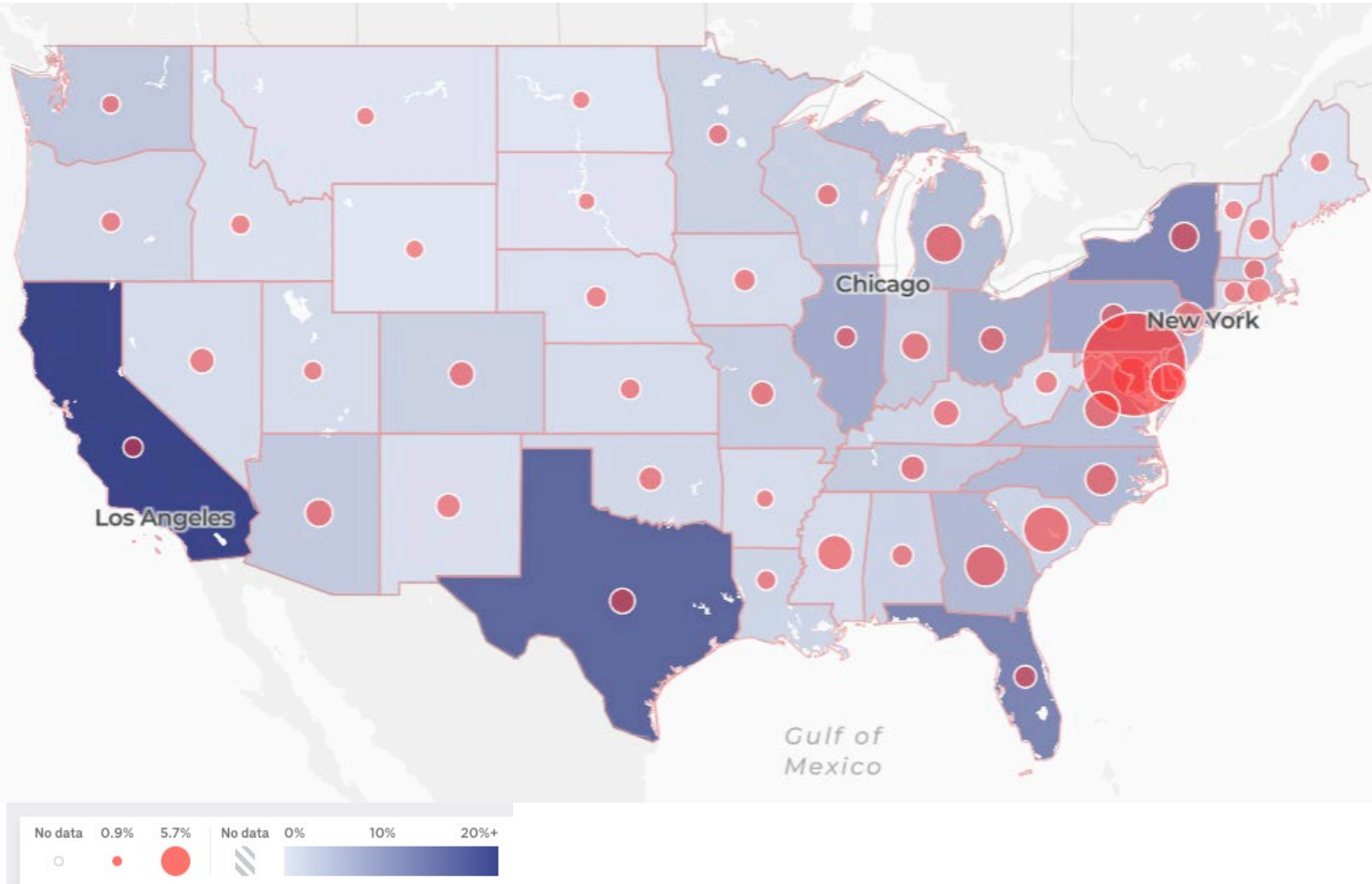


OUTof
REACH
THE HIGH COST OF HOUSING

This map displays the hourly wages that a full-time worker must earn (working 40 hours per week, 52 weeks per year) in every state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico in order to afford Fair Market Rent for a TWO-BEDROOM RENTAL HOME, without paying more than 30% of income.


NATIONAL LOW INCOME
HOUSING COALITION
www.nlihc.org/oor
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Eviction in the United States



- **3.7 million evictions filed annually (7 every minute)**
- **Serial filing**
 - Affects 1/3 of households
 - 1 in 7 Black renters (14.7%)
- **“Scarlet E”**
- **Extreme racial and gender disparities**
 - Highest risk among Black women with children

Eviction System Drivers

The eviction process is used as a rent collection tool

Low income renters are often rent burdened

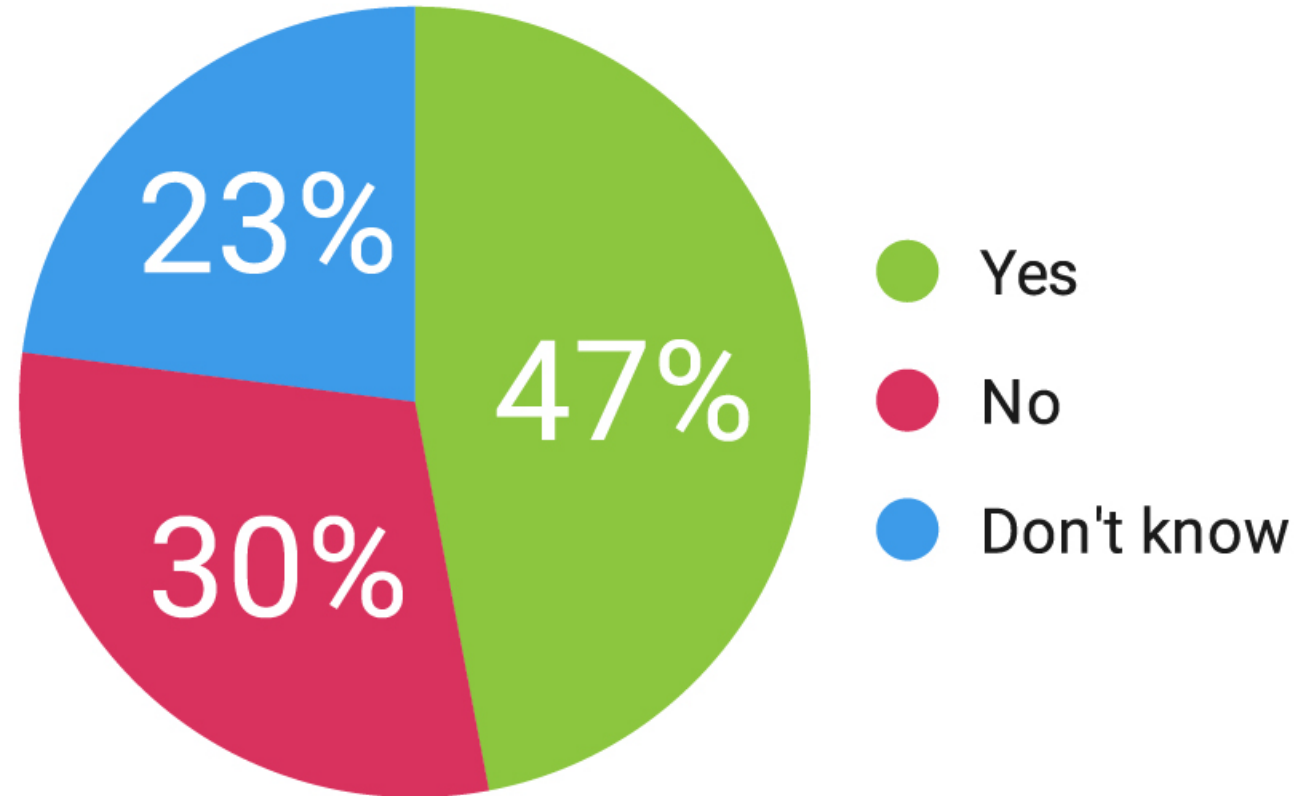
Tenants are evicted for small amounts of money (as little as \$120); sometimes multiple times

Tenants lack legal protections to contest eviction or supports to maintain housing

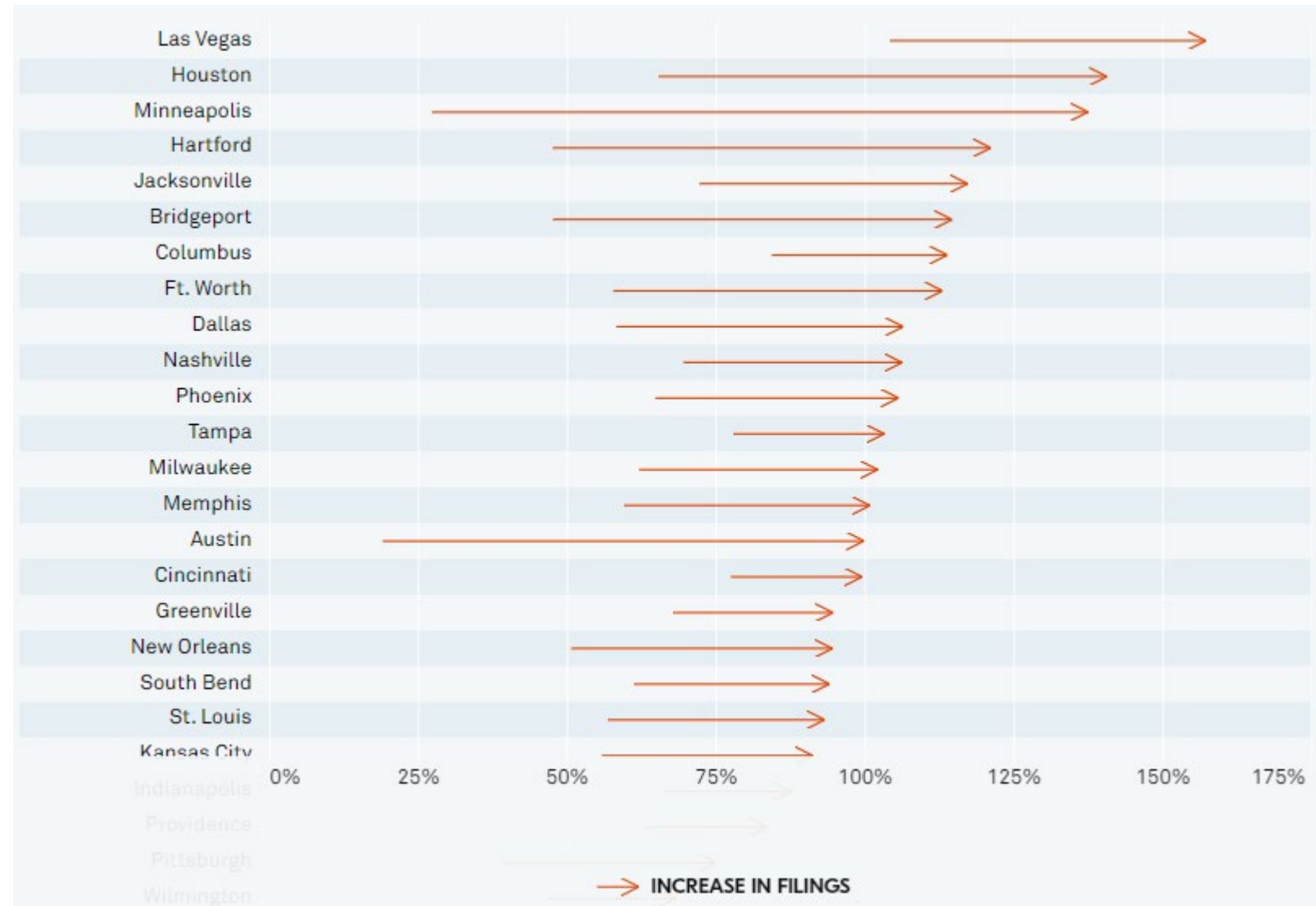
Preventing Evictions During the Pandemic Period

- Widespread push, funding, and guidance supporting access to legal assistance and court-based eviction diversion
 - *Nearly \$230 million in ARP funds used for increased access to legal counsel*
 - *ERA created or enhanced nearly 100 court-based eviction diversion programs*
- Rapid and equitable ERA spending
 - *By the end of 2021 1 in 4 grantees had spend all of their ERA1 and over half had spent 85%*
 - *Over 80% of ERA delivered to very low-income households (earning 50% of AMI or below)*
 - *People who disproportionately face eviction received the majority of funds*
 - 2/3 beneficiaries were female headed households
 - 40% self-identified as Black, 20% as Latino
- Result: eviction filings nearly half of historical levels *after* the CDC moratoria expired

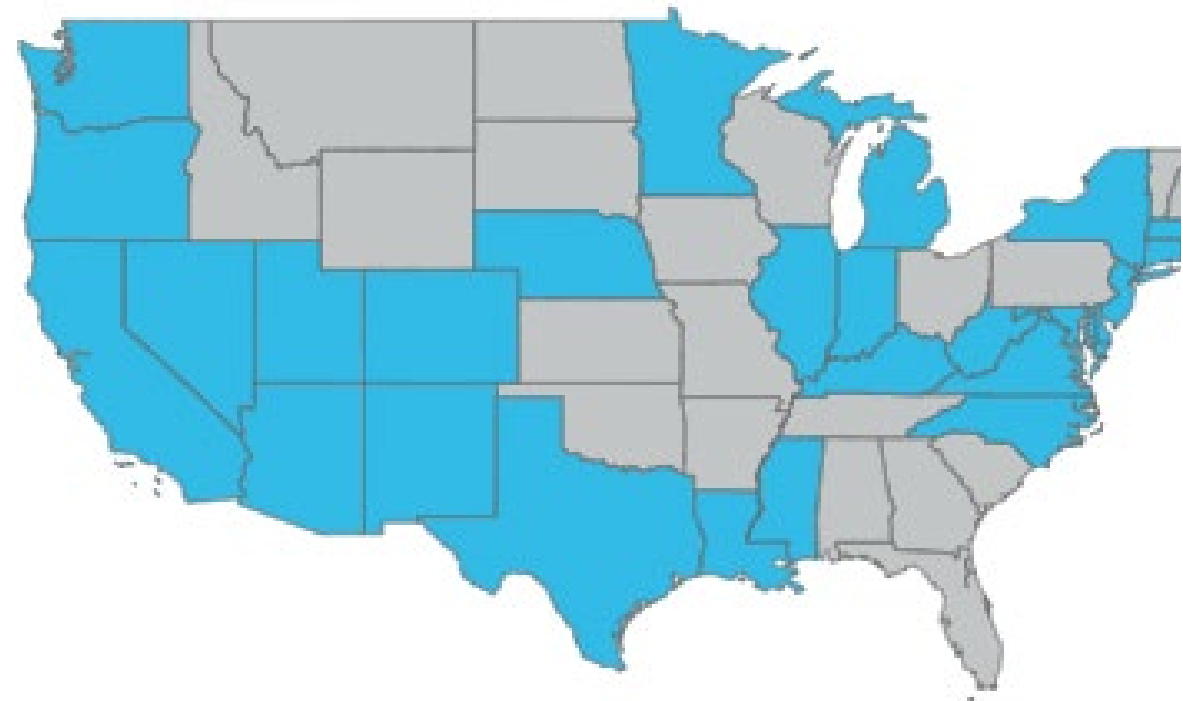
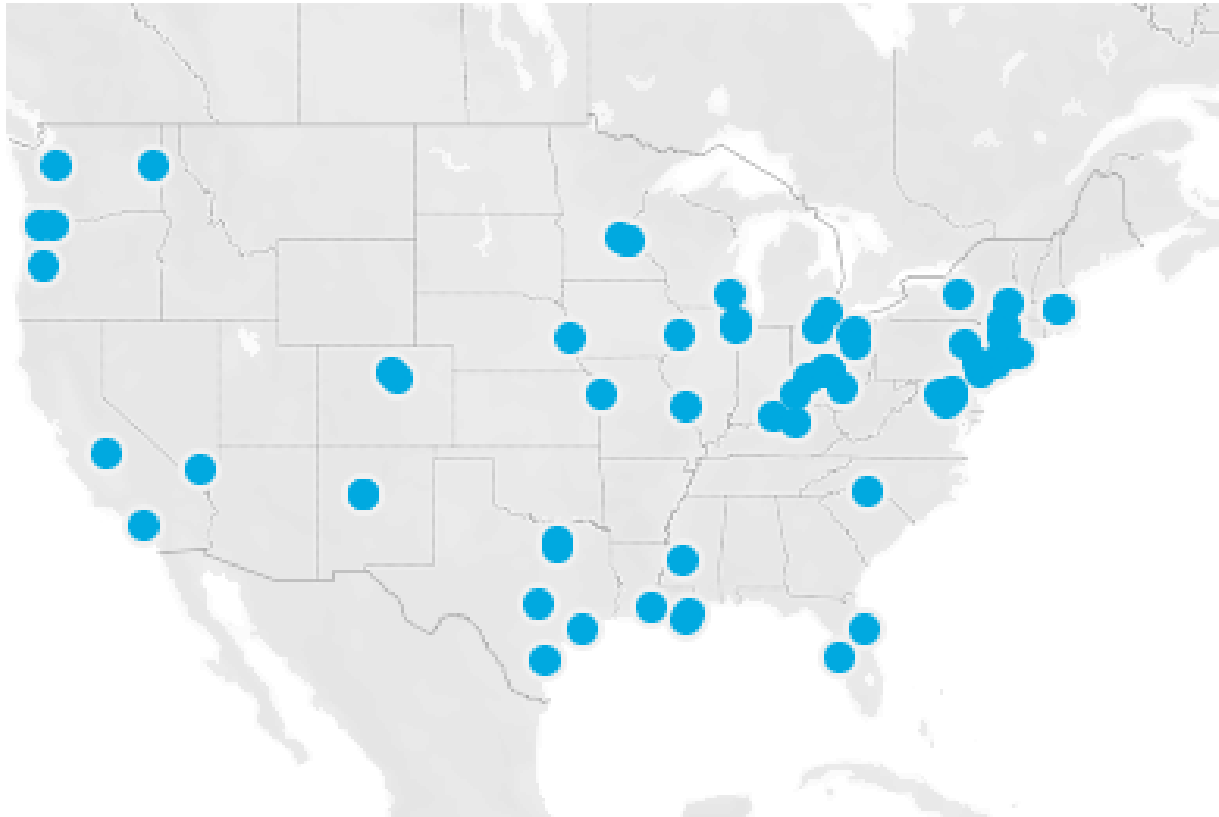
Share of Surveyed Jurisdictions Continuing Emergency Rental Assistance (n=118)



Change in eviction filings relative to historical average from 2021-2022



States and Localities with NEW Tenant Protections since January 2021



State and Local Tenant Protections Dashboard

51

States have passed tenant protections (including Washington DC and Puerto Rico)

174

Localities have passed tenant protections

36

State and Local Tenant Protection Preemptions

Implementing Authority
(includes preemption legislation)

Executive Orders	7
Court Order	20
ERA Program Policy	35
Local Ordinance	188
State Legislation	210
Resolution	7
Ballot Measure	9

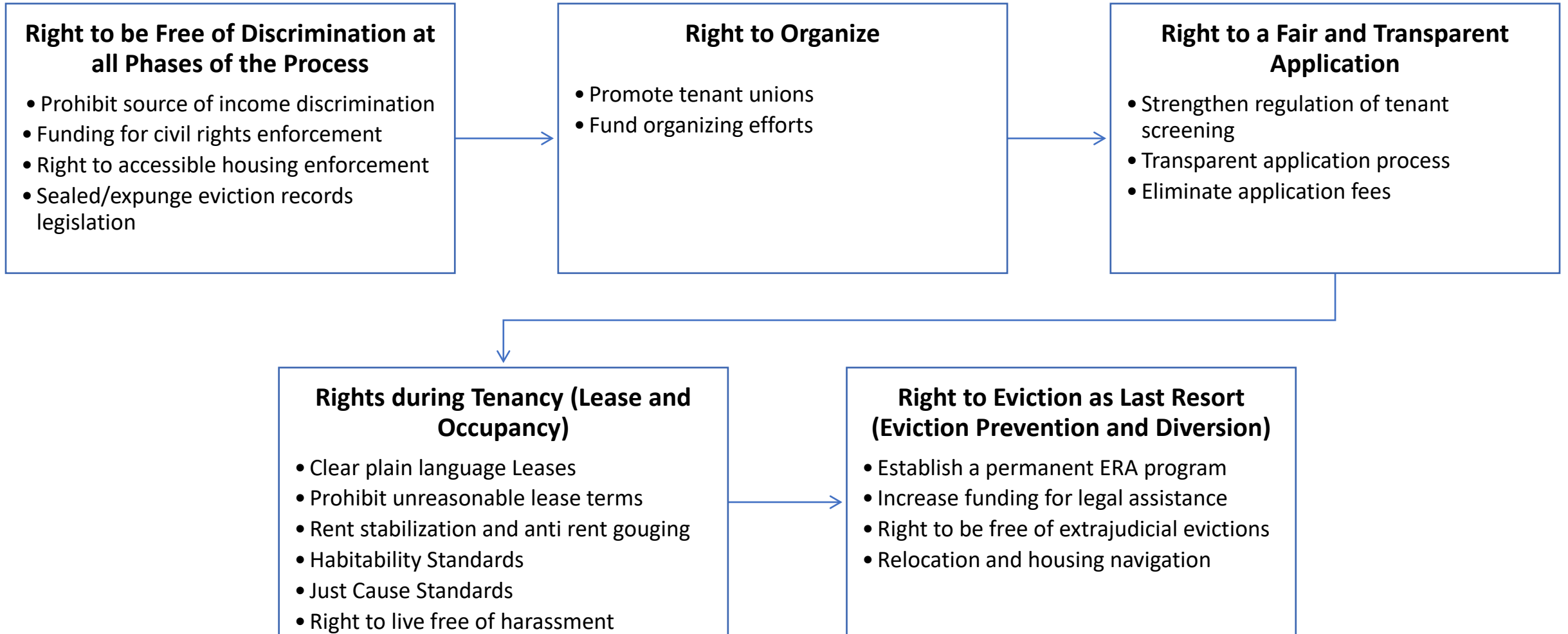
440

Total # of Protections Passed or Implemented

ERA-related protections ?	74
Eviction Moratorium ?	16
Allows Payment to Stop Eviction ?	15
Right to Counsel ?	23
Eviction Legal Defense Fund ?	4
Landlord and Tenant Mediation ?	6
Source of Income Protection ?	147
Just Cause Standards ?	27
Code Enforcement/Strengthening Habitability Standards ?	2
Rent Stabilization ?	16
Anti-Retaliation ?	47
Expunge/Seal Eviction Records ?	15
Limits Fees ?	13
Strengthens Written Notice or Summons Process ?	30
Notice Period, Nonpayment of Rent ?	13



Types of Tenant Protections



Impact

Right to Counsel

- New York (2019)
 - 84% of represented tenants remained in their homes
 - Evictions dropped 41%
 - Eviction filings dropped by 34%
 - Default judgments dropped 34%
- Cleveland
 - Tenants avoided a judgment or involuntary move in 93% of cases
- Connecticut
 - Involuntary move prevented in 71% of cases

Eviction Diversion

Across all eviction diversion programs that have been studied, 67-95% of participating tenants stayed housed.

In Boston, MA, over 95% of tenants were still housed 48 months later.

In Ramsey County, MN, 100% of eviction filings were expunged.

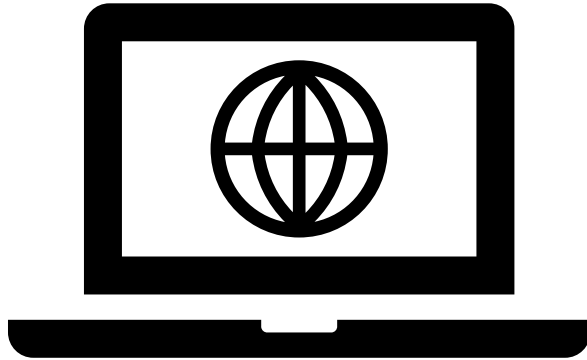
In Philadelphia, PA, 90% of cases reached an agreement or started mediation

10 things municipal leaders do to support renters



1. Engage tenants and support tenant organizing efforts
2. Collect and use eviction data to understanding where eviction hotspots are located.
3. Increasing the fee that landlords pay to file an eviction case
4. Require landlords to provide notice to tenants of their intention to evict
5. Build a rental registry
6. Ensure habitability standards
7. Enforce Anti Retaliation Efforts
8. Build capacity and align resources/efforts across municipal departments
9. Support sort term rental assistance and legal assistance such as a Right to Counsel
10. Understanding the range of land ordinances in place and zoning reform to increase affordable housing supply

NLIHC Tenant Protections Database



- <https://nlihc.org/tenant-protections>
- Are you aware of a tenant protection that is NOT currently on NLIHC's State and Local Tenant Protections database?
- Please complete this [form](https://forms.gle/8zx2PU5QaxsrEoLP9) (<https://forms.gle/8zx2PU5QaxsrEoLP9>) to submit a new protection into our database.
- With your help, we can make it easier for tenants and advocates to learn what protections low-income renters have in their states and localities to keep them stably housed.



ENSURING TENANT PROTECTIONS AND RENTAL HOUSING QUALITY

Jaime Kinder, Mayor, Meadville, PA

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Where do we start?

1. Safe and Dignified Housing





Residential Rental and licensing Program

What it Means for Tenants:

- Tenants know that any licensed unit has been inspected for compliance with City code requirements and that units are safe and habitable. Tenants can expect a scheduled inspection every 2 years (or 4 years if the unit completes two consecutive inspections with no need for a reinspection). Tenants can use the ordinance to defend against retaliatory evictions or other adverse actions from their landlord if the tenant reports suspected code violations at their residence.

Residential Rental and licensing Program

What it means for Landlords

- Rental units must be maintained for safety and kept up to code requirements for current and prospective tenants. Rental units will need to be registered and inspected every 2 years. Landlords can expect registration and inspection every 4 years if the unit completes two consecutive inspections with no need for a reinspection.



2. Anti-Retaliation Ordinance

- Strengthens tenants right
- Deters retaliation for lawful acts: Organizing, Requesting repairs, withholding portion of rent until repairs are done, making repairs and deducting it from rent, Reporting needed repairs, Speaking out ...

3. Support Solutions



Mission

- Common Roots creates permanently affordable housing that builds wealth and security for low-income residents in Meadville, Pennsylvania. We believe that all residents, regardless of income or identity, should be able to access, participate in, and benefit from sustainable, stable homes.
- Common Roots is a member-based, non-profit organization. We work in partnership with housing services providers, workforce and community development agencies, and other stakeholders to develop a cooperative housing ecosystem that improves housing options, stabilizes neighborhoods, and builds community wealth and resilience.

Values

- **Building Wealth through Cooperation:** Common Roots is committed to building community wealth and resilience through cooperative development in the housing sector. We develop shared equity housing and provide education and support for cooperative enterprises around property maintenance, construction, weatherization, and land use.
- **Community Development:** Common Roots combats community deterioration by developing, rehabilitating, and maintaining quality housing in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Common Roots is committed to protecting the natural environment and promoting the ecologically sound use of land, resources, and materials for the long-term health, safety, and resilience of the community.





What else can we do?

- *Support organizations that support your people.
- *Strengthen partnerships.
- *Lean on you grass roots and social justice organizations to help.
- *Encourage people to organize to create power...Tenants union.



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Eileen Cipriani, City Business Administrator, Scranton
PA

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Ensuring Tenant Protections & Rental Housing Quality

City of Scranton

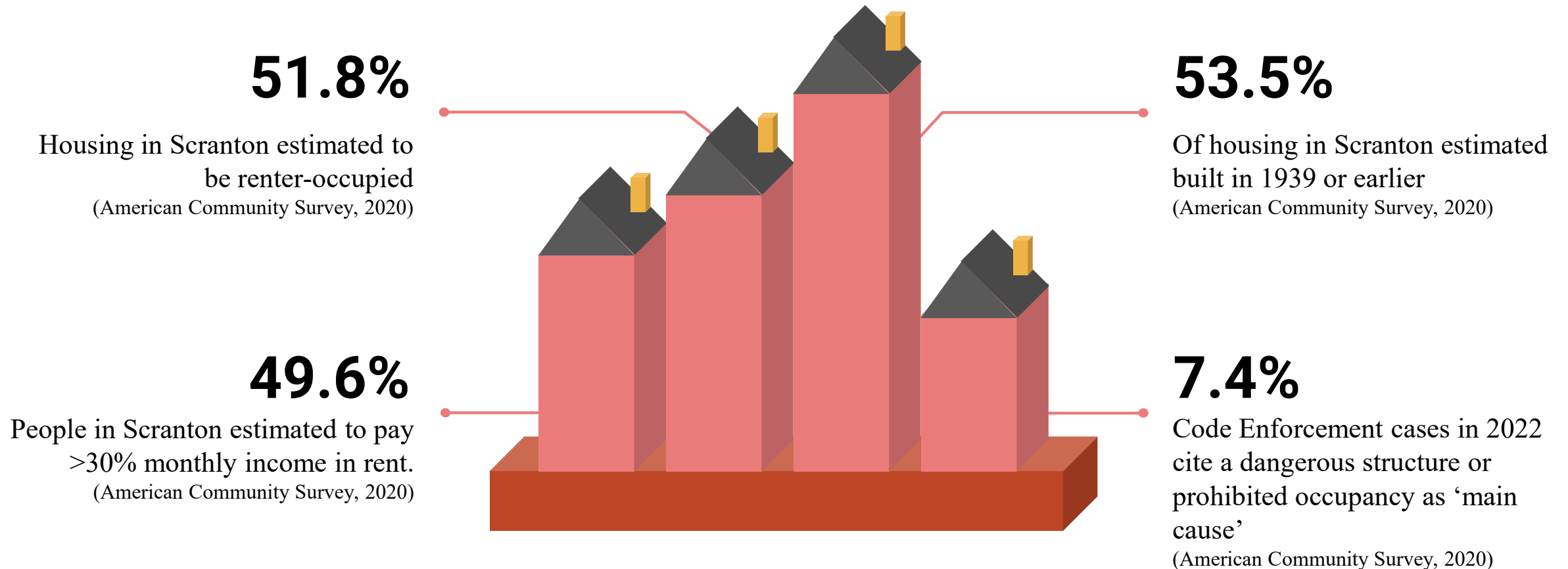
Need for Quality Affordable Housing

- . Owner-Occupied vs Rental
- . Cost of Living
- . Live to Work
- . Quality of Housing



Background

There are around 8,838 suspected rentals in the city. It would take over **14 years** to inspect Scranton rental housing stock at the city's current staffing.

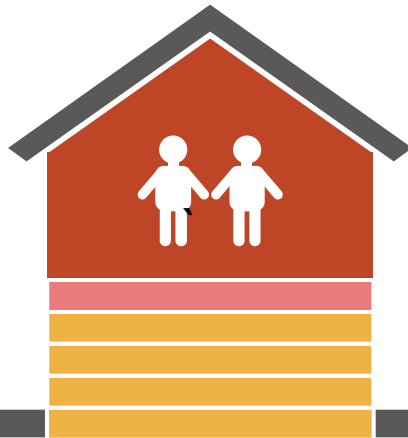


Why do we need Rental Licensing?



Health & Safety

Reduce fire incidence, health risks, etc. by ensuring buildings meet code.



Local Contact

In the event of an emergency or code violations, need to contact the property owner.



Quality of Housing

Ensure rental properties are maintained and comply with appropriate standards. Protect tenants from exploitative landlords.



Rental Info

A registration database allows oversight of landlords and rental properties in the city.

Rental Registration Reform

Over the past year, the City has undertaken an extensive research effort to better understand the current program's shortcomings and to identify best practices from our peer cities.



Rental Licensing Reform

The RENTAL Ordinance of 2022 Called For:

- **Regular Health and Safety Inspections** to check for life safety issues, such as smoke and CO detectors, ingress and egress.
- **Improved Rental License Compliance** through dedicating more resources and strengthening enforcement mechanisms, and by using a new list of the 16,000 + likely rental units, identified through county records.
- **Improved Condition of Housing Stock** and reduced blight by taking a proactive approach to rental unit inspections.

Rental Licensing Reform

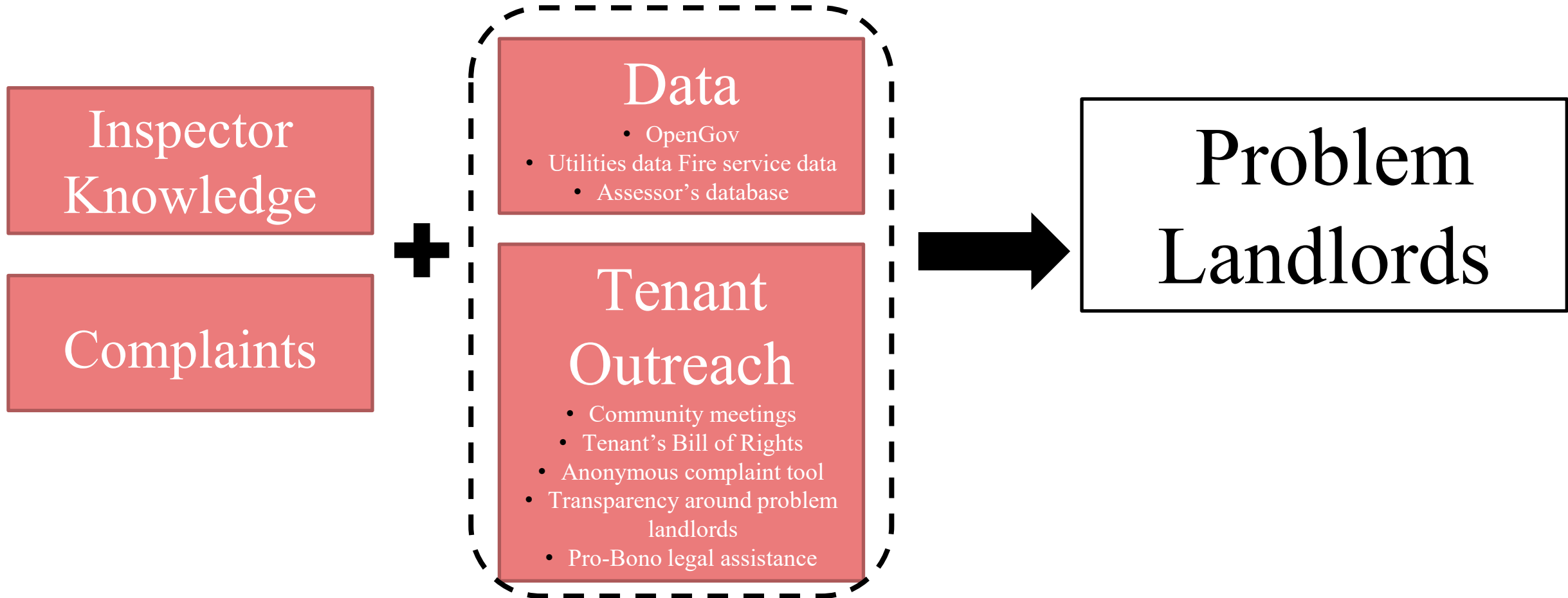
Reinvigorating our Rental Licensing program entailed new inspectors and repurposed positions, totaling 5 housing inspectors dedicated to rental inspections, and a rental manager. This model that includes regular inspections is in line with the majority of our peer cities that maintain a rental registration program.



Capacity: Moving from reactive to proactive

Current Approach

Proactive Approach



An aerial photograph of a residential neighborhood, identified as Census Tract 1031. The map shows a grid of streets with numerous houses. A large, semi-transparent brown polygon outlines the boundary of the census tract. Several yellow dots are scattered across the map, likely indicating specific locations of interest. A single purple dot is located near the bottom center of the tract. The surrounding area includes green fields, a baseball field, and some commercial buildings.

Census Tract 1031

(est. 9% registered)

Total Occupied Housing Units	835
Owner Occupied Housing Units	479
Renter Occupied Housing Units	356
% Rentals	43%

Additional Information

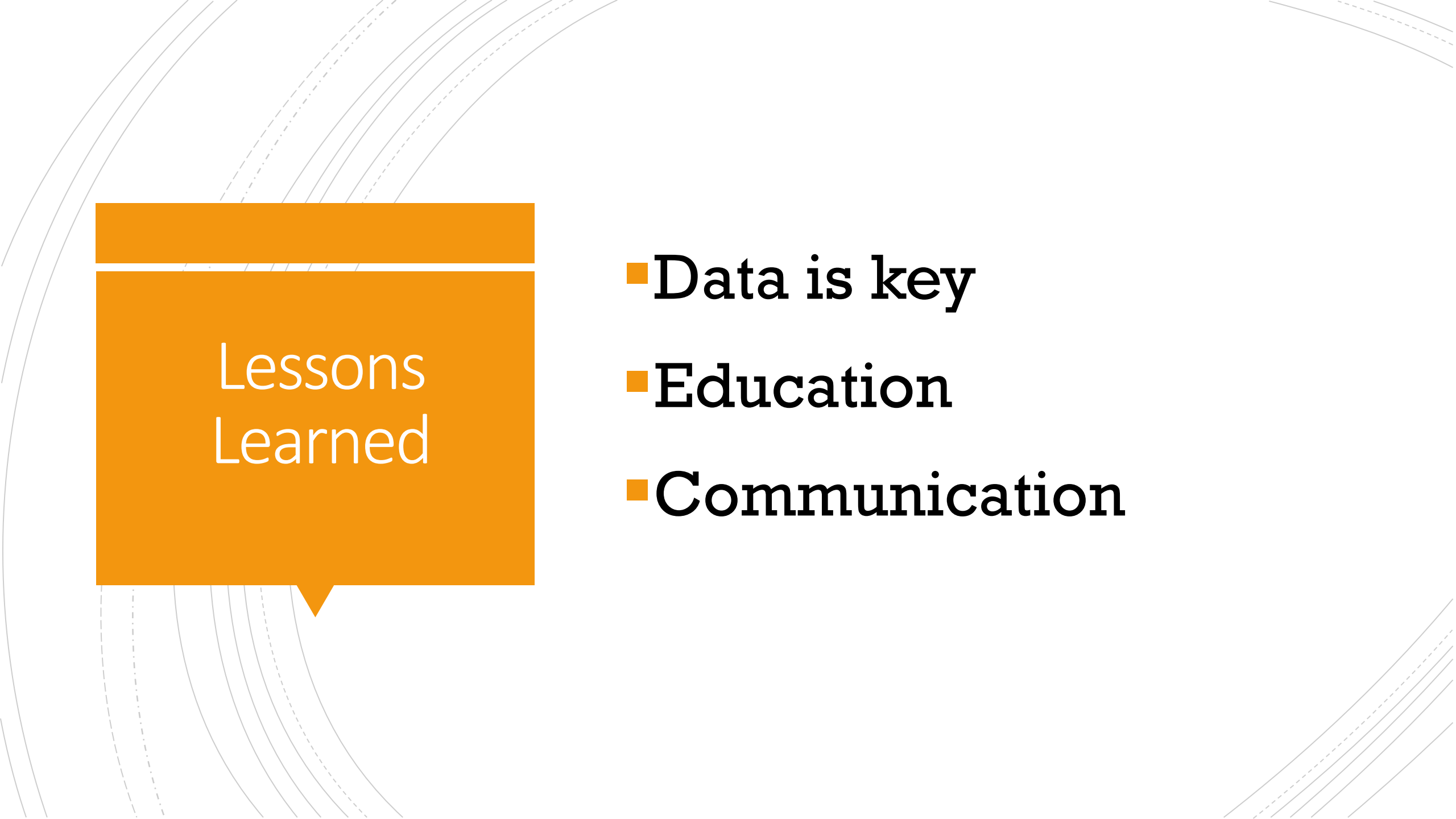
Rental Ordinance – License

- Replacing “registration”
- Required for every rental property- family occupied units
- Legally required in order to collect rent
- Renewed annually
- New rentals must obtain license within 30 days of tenancy
- Done online
- Must list a local “rental contact” (a natural person)
- Must give tenants a copy of the license
- Changes in license info must be reported within 10 days

Additional Information

Rental Ordinance – Inspections

- Health and safety *only*
- Regular inspection every 3 years, scheduled with the landlord in advance
- Follows a public checklist – an open-book exam!
- If rental property passes regular inspection unconditionally, next regular inspection will be in 5 years
- Ad hoc inspections allowed at any time, if violation is suspected
- Reinspection's if needed

The background features several thin, curved lines in shades of gray, some solid and some dashed, creating a sense of motion or a globe-like pattern.

Lessons Learned

- **Data is key**
- **Education**
- **Communication**



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City of Williamsport, PA

Redevelopment Authority/Land Bank

Rehab and Redevelopment



Rehab & Redevelopment



Economic Development

- Working on public-private opportunities
- Lycoming College
- Old City



**TRACHTE MUSIC CENTER
LYCOMING COLLEGE**



**WILLOW STREET IMPROVEMENTS
FROM BASIN ST.**





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