

Delaware Developmental Disabilities

Margaret O'Neil Building, 2nd Floor
410 Federal Street - Suite 2 Dover, Delaware 19903
Phone: 302.739.3333 ♦ Fax: 302.739.2015 ♦ Website: www.ddc.delaware.gov



Issue: Senate Bill 205

Background:

People with disabilities have difficulty finding accessible, affordable and safe housing in Delaware. The Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council supports legislation that helps people with disabilities live integrated, independent lives in their home communities.

What SB 205 is:

This legislation protects elderly people and people with disabilities who live in manufactured home communities by ensuring that the rental fees for the land where their home is located does not increase unjustly. During a 12-month period, owners of manufactured home communities would not be able to increase rents higher than the yearly percentage increase of the Consumer Price Index ("CPI-U").

What SB 205 is not:

This legislation is not "rent control." Manufactured home community owners who can demonstrate a legitimate need such as an increase in the operating costs, can apply for a waiver with the Governor's Advisory Council on Manufactured Housing. This advisory council includes a Real Estate industry professional and will seek advice from University of Delaware economists. This bill will not prevent capital investments in manufactured home communities.

Facts:

- In 1998, there were 44 housing market areas in 13 different states, where a person with a disability needed to pay more than their entire monthly income for housing costs. Ten years later, 219 housing market areas in 41 states, had modest one-bedroom rents higher than monthly SSI.
- More than 3 million manufactured home households include someone over 50 years old. Their median income is \$22,000. (AARP)
- The high cost of rental housing affects the growing numbers of people receiving Veterans Administration (VA) benefits. Veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars rely on VA disability payments as their sole source of support. Some of these brave Americans will languish in institutions because they are priced out of the rental housing market.

Policy Statement:

Manufactured home communities are a key part of providing affordable housing for elderly people, veterans and people with disabilities in Delaware. SB 205 ensures that rent increases in manufactured home communities are justified and do not harm these vulnerable populations. The Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council supports SB 205 and applauds the legislature for considering legislation that breaks down barriers for people with disabilities.

Thanks in advance for your careful consideration

