

# Good cause eviction vote stalled as City Council debates ordinance

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Rochester City Council was set to vote for the good cause eviction protections legislation Tuesday night but the vote was stalled as the council sparred over amendments that had not yet been added.

President Miguel Melendez made the plan to vote on the ordinance Dec. 17 to ensure the legislation was strong enough to cover as many renters as possible.

"I believe it is important to act in December so that my council colleagues can vet the full package of resolutions in coordination with the report, and with that due diligence, give this important legislation their full consideration," Melendez said in a press release.

Council members Mary Lupien, Stanley Martin and Kim Smith expressed in a statement the urgency in voting for the law Tuesday night, mentioning that more than 300 families have faced evictions since the good cause bill was introduced in June.

"Since our last council meeting in October, nearly 100 families have had an eviction enforced," Lupien said. "Being that Thanksgiving is Thursday, Christmas is next month, my fear is if we wait on passing this we may have 100 more families that have an eviction enforced over the holidays."

Council member Willie Lightfoot was also prepared to vote for good cause Tuesday night.

"My understanding was we were going to be voting on good cause today," Lightfoot said.

After much discussion, the vote on the law was delayed until Dec. 17, leaving many council meeting attendees angry and frustrated.

## What is the "good cause eviction" legislation?

To remove a tenant under this proposed law, landlords would be required to have a "good cause," such as non-payment or violating the lease. The proposal also would allow tenants to challenge rent hikes above 8.45%.

The council first introduced legislation to opt into good cause in June but the initial version was considered to be the weakest in the state due to it having an "LLC loophole."

The loophole would exclude about 24,000 rental units, leaving thousands of renters vulnerable to predatory landlords. In a report, the council recommended passing an amendment to close the loophole.

Ten upstate localities have passed such laws, including Albany, Kingston, Ithaca, Poughkeepsie, Newburgh, Beacon, New Paltz, Nyack, Hudson and Fishkill.

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