

If it's "agent," then this can sweep across unrelated owners. A single property manager or licensee might represent many separate people or entities that are completely unrelated to one another. If an applicant pays a fee to an agent to apply for a property owned by Owner A, does that bar collecting a fee when they apply to Owner B—who never received the money but still bears the screening cost? And what if those owners use different applications, criteria, or screening standards?

Some portfolios span numerous legal entities and/or distinct beneficial owner pools. That's normal in real estate. The bill doesn't explain how multi-entity portfolios and third-party management are supposed to work under this rule.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to find HB 1375 **Inexpedient to Legislate**.

Thank you for your time, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

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ITL: HB 1553 – Pet-related fees and rent in residential tenancies

Position: Oppose (ITL)

Bill Summary: HB 1553 creates a new RSA 540-D that caps monthly pet rent at 1% of monthly rent (regardless of number of pets), prohibits nonrefundable pet fees, and provides for tenant enforcement with attorney’s fees. It also clarifies that landlords may still charge for actual pet-caused damages and that the chapter does not apply to service animals or support animals protected under disability law.

Key Points

1. **This is price control, and the costs don’t disappear.** If pet-related costs can’t be charged transparently, they will be baked into base rent for “pet-friendly” units—raising costs for tenants without pets and not necessarily saving pet owners money.
2. **It will reduce the supply of pet-friendly housing.** Some portion of owners will respond by going “no pets,” which shifts the market equilibrium: fewer pet-friendly options, higher prices for the remaining ones.
3. **“Regardless of the number of pets” creates adverse selection.** The bill forces one price for one pet and multiple pets, which encourages higher-impact pet households into the capped category and pushes risk-averse owners to opt out entirely.
4. **It increases friction around assistance-animal requests.** Larger economic differences between pet-friendly and pet-free units predictably increase the volume and contentiousness of accommodation interactions, raising compliance anxiety and dispute risk for both sides.
5. **Fee-shifting invites litigation over small dollars.** Creating a private right of action plus attorney’s fees in a high-misunderstanding area (“rent” vs “fees,” how things are labeled in leases) is a recipe for more litigation, not more housing stability.
6. **My own operational response is simple: I don’t accept pets, and if this becomes law I will never reconsider that position.** Bills like this make “pet-friendly” status more difficult to offer rationally and more legally fraught to administer.