

Southeast Working-Class Task Force June-July 2019 Newsletter

Indiana's landlord-tenant laws are skewed: heavily favor landlords

A June 27 *Indianapolis Star* story emphasized the concern of Marion County housing advocates who say Indiana's landlord-tenant laws are skewed heavily in favor of landlords, paving the way for unscrupulous landlords to prey on the most vulnerable renters.

An *Indy Star* investigation highlighted many of the factors behind the weak state and local regulatory systems that help trap renters in situations ranging from disgusting to dangerous. Read the story here:

<https://www.indystar.com/story/news/investigations/2019/06/27/3-ways-indiana-could-protect-renters-bad-landlords/1541103001/>

The *Star* story examined factors behind what advocates call an "eviction crisis" in Marion County for the Indy Neighborhood Housing Partnership.

The story shows how renters lived horribly while their landlords lived large. The problem is our government helped landlords do it.

Behind the stories is a tangle of corporations connected to one man: Herbert "Bert" Whalen. Read that story here:

<https://www.indystar.com/story/news/investigations/2019/06/27/ex-fox-friends-host-clayton-morris-partner-bert-whalen-got-rich-tenants-lived-horrible/1351737001/>

Recommendations

The *Star* report found a few common sense reforms could help level the playing field without harming landlords. Here are the recommendations:

- Pre-occupancy inspections must ensure rentals meet basic standards
 - Allow renters to withhold or apply rent payments toward repairs
 - Add teeth to landlord registry--take aggressive enforcement approaches
- <https://www.indystar.com/story/news/2017/07/10/indianapolis-realty-agents-still-skeptical-city-landlord-registry/393993001/>

The SEW-CTF newsletter is edited by task force Chair John Harris Loflin (john.loflin@seindy.org). The task force meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:30 on the 2nd floor at 901 Shelby Street