



MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee
From: Nicholas Kikis, Vice President of Legislative & Regulatory Affairs
Date: March 9, 2021
Re: NJAA Opposition to S-2516 (Turner)

On behalf of the New Jersey Apartment Association (NJAA), and our members who own, develop, and manage both market-rate and affordable housing for over a million New Jersey residents, **NJAA strongly opposes S-2516 (Turner)**, and asks you to vote “**NO**” when it comes before the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee for a vote on March 11, 2021.

S-2516 would prohibit the use of credit scores, risk scores, bankruptcies, eviction records, or any other assessments to determine the creditworthiness of a prospective tenant seeking affordable housing. While we understand and support the goal of expanding opportunities for affordable housing, the bill as currently drafted, creates a screening process that contains contradictions and would ultimately be unworkable.

Furthermore, the individualized assessment process outlined in the bill is overly intrusive. For example, an owner who is evaluating the creditworthiness of a prospective tenant who meets the income eligibility, would be required to consider factors such as a tenant’s budgeting practices and their health history. Ultimately, consideration of these and other factors, would create a process that will undoubtedly result in unnecessary litigation.

New Jersey has a limited supply of affordable housing, and we support policies that will encourage the development of enough affordable housing to meet demand. We are concerned, however, that S-2516 will make affordable housing projects more difficult to finance and develop, while creating more hurdles for responsible property owners and creating confusion for landlords and tenants alike.

NJAA stands ready to work with the sponsors on legislation that will take meaningful steps toward solving our affordable housing crisis.

Once again, NJAA **strongly opposes S-2516 (Turner)** and we would respectfully ask you to vote “**NO**” when it comes before the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee for a vote on March 11, 2021. Should you have any questions or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 732-992-0600.

The New Jersey Apartment Association represents over 220,000 multifamily apartment units throughout the State of New Jersey. We are a statewide organization dedicated to maintaining, improving, and building both market-rate and affordable rental housing that serves over one million New Jersey residents.