

The Truth About How Rent Mandates Will Impact Renters in Massachusetts

Maximum rent increases every year

Under this measure, vacant units remain under the rent mandate law: meaning that property owners can never reset to market, forcing them to raise rents to the maximum allowed every year just to pay their bills and protect the value of their property.

Shrinking housing supply means fewer options

When Massachusetts had rent mandates the first time, the City of Cambridge lost 2500 units of "renter occupied housing" in just ten years. Owners convert to condos, rent to family or friends, or take units off the market rather than rent at a loss, reducing options for everyone.

No means testing = misallocation of housing

Rent mandates do not prioritize those most in need. Previously in Cambridge, "93% of the people residing in rent controlled units...were overwhelmingly white, college educated, in their prime earning years aged 25 to 40, single and living alone."

Declining housing quality over time

When rents are capped but operating costs continue to rise, property owners have fewer resources to maintain and improve their buildings. Over time, this leads to deferred maintenance, fewer upgrades, and a gradual decline in housing quality for renters.

New renters have nowhere to go

Research shows that tenants in rent mandated housing stay far longer, and new units are created far more slowly. With less turnover and housing creation, new renters or current renters looking for more space are left without options.

Budget cuts hurt community services

A 2026 study from the Tufts Center for State Policy Analysis found that this question will shrink the residential property tax base by anywhere from 6-9% in municipalities across Massachusetts, forcing cities and towns to cut services like education and public safety

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