ASSEMBLY, No. 545

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Assemblywoman ANGELICA M. JIMENEZ
District 32 (Bergen and Hudson)
Assemblywoman ANNETTE CHAPARRO
District 33 (Hudson)

Co-Sponsored by:
Assemblyman Auth, Assemblywoman Tucker, Assemblyman Giblin and Assemblywoman Carter

SYNOPSIS

Criminalizes owner or landlord knowingly renting dwelling to tenant that is illegal occupancy which causes serious bodily injury to or death of another person.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/15/2021)

AN ACT concerning certain dwellings and supplementing Title 2C of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. a. An owner or landlord is guilty of a fourth degree crime if the owner or landlord knowingly rents a dwelling to a tenant that is an illegal occupancy which causes serious bodily injury to or the death of another person.

b. A conviction under this section does not preclude the application of any criminal, civil, or administrative remedy or penalty under any other provision of law.

For purposes of this act:

"illegal occupancy" shall mean an occupancy in residential premises that fails to comply with local or State housing regulations or codes, local zoning ordinances, or has violations affecting the health and safety of the tenants.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill makes it a fourth degree crime for an owner or landlord to knowingly rent a dwelling to a tenant that is an illegal occupancy which causes serious bodily injury to or the death of another *person*. A crime of the fourth degree is punishable by up to 18 months imprisonment, fine of up to $10,000, or both.

Under current law, an owner or landlord who rents a dwelling to a tenant that is an illegal occupancy may be subject to certain civil penalties and fines as set forth in N.J.S.A.2A:18-61.1 et seq. including, but not limited to, reimbursing a tenant for relocation expenses in the amount equal to six times the monthly rent if the tenant is evicted for illegal occupancy. A conviction under this bill would not preclude the imposition of any other criminal, civil, or administrative remedy or penalty provided by any other provision of law. "Illegal occupancy" is defined in the bill as an occupancy in residential premises that fails to comply with local or State housing regulations or codes, local zoning ordinances, or has violations affecting the health and safety of the tenants.