

# Bill would help landlords evict drug users, dealers

By Tim Richard  
staff writer

Landlords would be able to start evicting drug-using and drug-dealing tenants three weeks faster under a bill before the state House of Representatives.

"Presently, a landlord must give a 30-day notice before eviction procedures commence," said Rep. Lyn Bankes, R-Livonia. "I am intending to shorten the time process for evictions when drugs are involved" to seven days, said Bankes, sponsor of House Bills 5318 and 5812.

After three hours of debate, her bills were reported out by the House Urban Affairs Committee with votes from herself and James Kosteva, D-Canton.

"THE BILLS were strongly supported by state drug czar Donald Reisig, Livonia housing chief James Inglis, and operators of private and public housing from around the state.

"The stumbling block was whether tenants would be evicted from apartments for drugs before they were convicted in court.

"My concern is for the person wrongly accused," said Rep. Michael Benneke, D-Detroit.

"Then we would be subject to civil damages," replied Inglis.

Dave Cahill, a staff member of the House Judiciary Committee, offered

a rewritten version of Bankes' bills to raise the burden of proof for drug evictions. Cahill cited an Ann Arbor "disco" where massed federal agents raided a building and gave tenants 15 minutes to be on the curb.

"A lot of misinformation," Bankes said, because the woman quoted in news accounts actually was found in possession of drugs for the eighth time.

After nearly an hour of testimony, Cahill left with no one willing to sponsor his amendment.

INGLIS, who manages 779 units of government-assisted housing in Livonia, said it now takes 60 days after an arrest to actually get rid of a drug-using tenant — 30 days notice and the rest in court time.

"This would reduce the time by 21 days," he said. "The longer they're there, the more we are viewed by other tenants as an ineffective agency."

"We are asking to get into court quicker. It (eviction) is up to the judge."

Other public housing managers from around the state gave similar reports.

"We have tenants meetings. The tenants complain. I have to tell them I can't get anything done," said Carlo Sanchez, Grand Rapids public housing chief.

Sanchez said landlords don't want to hurt innocent family members of drug dealers. "We work with the De-

partment of Social Services. We don't just put 'em on the curb. We make arrangements."

REISIG, AN Ingham County prosecutor and circuit judge before taking the state drug post, said Bankes' bill would benefit innocent tenants.

"I come down on the side of the elderly and poor who get a 'Why can't we have peace?'" Reisig said.

To those like Benneke who feared eviction before conviction, Reisig replied, "We can trust the judicial process to determine if someone is using drugs. There will be an occasional eviction before conviction. That will be rare. The landlord will have the burden of proof that the tenant in 332 of the Jonesville project was using drugs."

Reisig added that the problem isn't just in inner cities. "Eighty percent of drug abuse is by us white folks," he said.

A private landlord with projects in three western Michigan cities said he went to court nine times in drug cases.

"I'm not going to waste my investors' money by going to court on a whim. I'll have my proofs, my evidence, my other renters (as witnesses)," he said.

Medina Sanders, Ypsilanti housing director, favored the shortened notice because "If we give them 30 days, that's time for them to tear up the unit . . . and intimidate other witnesses."

IN OTHER housing matters, the House Urban Affairs Committee reported out a bill to allow cities to recover demolition costs from slum landlords.

House Bill 5284 will allow cities which tear down dilapidated houses to obtain liens against property elsewhere in Michigan owned by the same landlord. Bankes and Kosteva voted yes.

"They buy houses for \$500 to \$4,000," said sponsor Burton Leland, D-Detroit. "They make no repairs. Sometimes they pay no taxes. If the city has to demolish them at a cost of several thousands, if you own property anywhere in the state, the city can get a lien. It's drastic," he said.

Albert Thomas, a Detroit city official, said his department annually demolishes 2,000 buildings at a cost of \$5,500 to \$6,000 each to curb blight. But the lots are assessed at only \$500 to \$800.

The panel amended the bill to assure mortgages would be a prior lien over a city demolition lien.

# Airshow flies June 23-24

Team America, the only civilian flight team authorized to perform at U.S. Air Force bases, is the headline act at this year's Wayne County Air show.

The show is scheduled June 23-24 at Willow Run Airport.

The California-based flying unit has entertained at air shows in 22 states and three Canadian provinces. The Willow Run show marks its first Detroit-area appearance.

Lead pilot Chuck Lischer has logged more than 6,000 flying hours in 60 different aircraft. The unit flies SIAL Marchetti F-260 aircraft.

"It was the only airplane that fit the image I was looking for," Lischer said. "It has sleek, elegant flowing lines and it was the plane that fit."

Two of the planes were bought from the government of Zaire. Lischer's own plane had initially been designed for a mercenary pilot but was impounded and stripped of its weapons before sale.

Though still used as fighter planes in some African nations, the Italian-made planes are more commonly used in training exercises. The craft reach maximum cruising speed of 215 miles per hour and can dive at speeds of up to 305 miles per hour.

Also on the bill will be:

• The U.S. Army Golden Knights parachute team.

The team has appeared at Super Bowl and World Series games and at the 1980 winter Olympics in Lake Placid.

Founded in 1959, the team includes 80 men and women. The team has captured 10 international trophies and 80 national trophies for its precision jumping.

• Glider pilot Oscar Boesch of Toronto.

Boesch, a pilot for more than 45 years, was a German fighter pilot during World War II.

Emigrating to Canada after the war, he has appeared in numerous television and movie productions, including the IMAX film "Silent Sky."

He has dedicated his air show performances to the cause of peace.

• Daredevil Jim Roberts. Roberts, a New Jersey resident, will pilot a specially-designed Laser 200 aircraft, winner of a world stunt flying title, and a Long EZ, two-seat airplane, designed to perform loops, barrel rolls and other stunts.

The air show opens 9 a.m. each day. Featured performances begin 1 p.m. Advance tickets, are \$7 for adults \$5 for children 6-11. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$8 for children at the door.

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