

Senate passes bill adding new regulations to landlord-tenant relations

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The Senate signed off 18-14 on a bill that would make sweeping changes to landlord-tenant laws.

The legislation, which previously cleared the Assembly, now heads to Gov. Scott Walker's desk over Dem objections that it would disadvantage tenants by chipping away at provisions aimed to protect them.

Sen. Mark Miller, D-Monona, said as a former landlord he can attest that tenants are often unfamiliar with the law and often "can be intimidated."

"What this bill does is takes even more resources away from tenants, and that would be terribly true for low-income tenants," he said.

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But proponents of the bill have previously argued the provisions would help mitigate increasing costs for landlords.

The legislation would increase limits on fees that landlords can charge tenants for credit checks and limit rent abatement terms. It would also limit the amount that municipalities can charge for inspections and allow landlords to include past rent on eviction notices and labor charges in billings for reasonable repairs.

Dems during debate also attempted to refer the bill back to committee, an effort that failed along party lines.