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68TH CONGRESS }
1st Session }

SENATE

} REPORT
No. 509 }

EXTENSION OF TIME TO THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA RENT COMMISSION

MAY 5 (calendar day, MAY 9), 1924.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. BALL, from the Committee on the District of Columbia, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 7962]

The Committee on the District of Columbia, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 7962), to extend for the period of two years the provisions of Title II of the food control and the District of Columbia rents act, approved October 22, 1919, as amended, having considered the same, do report it to the Senate, with the recommendation that it do pass.

The most strenuous opponents of the bill are, principally, speculative real estate operators and builders. They endeavor through exorbitant rentals, by which almost the last dollar available for food, clothing, and other necessary living expenses is squeezed out of the unfortunate tenants, to make quick turnovers and sales of rental properties and apartments in the District. Tenants must have shelter somewhere or be jailed for vagrancy, but they can and must, because of present rental conditions, do with less food and fewer clothes. The tendency of the rent act is to restrain reckless speculation and the inflation of real estate values and to stabilize prices throughout the whole District.

Though rentals have been and now are being increased out of all just proportion to values, particularly in old buildings the cost of which ordinarily was one-half the present cost of reproduction, the existence of the rent act has restrained and prevented wholesale eviction and has deterred many landlords from making unconscionable and exorbitant increases and the determinations of the commission have brought relief from extortion to thousands of tenants and their families.

Failure to continue the present rent legislation, in the opinion of a majority of your committee, would be disastrous and if it should be permitted to lapse, a period of greatly increased rentals and wholesale evictions will result after the expiration of the present law.

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Your committee therefore recommends that the proposed bill be passed at the earliest possible date so that the fears and anxieties under which thousands upon thousands of tenants are now laboring may be allayed as soon as may be humanly possible.

