



# 2024 General Assembly: What We Oppose

*The Coalition stands against bills that are in opposition to our mission and work: legislation that would reduce affordable rental housing, increase barriers to housing or make it more difficult for tenants to stay housed, and criminalize unsheltered homelessness.*

**HB5: The Safer KY Act.** This wide-ranging bill claims to address public safety by increasing criminalization and penalties, and includes many pieces that are alarming those of us who live and work in homeless services.

**The Safer KY Act is anti-housing first.** The bill would make it illegal for local governments to use federal dollars on successful, evidence-based housing first programs, putting at least \$30 million in annual federal housing funds at risk across Kentucky.

**The Safer KY Act would criminalize all tenant damages.** The bill would criminalize tenant damages (costing any more than one cent) to rental units, with jail time of up to one year and fines of up to \$500 for the first offense.

**The Safer KY Act would criminalize homelessness.** The bill would criminalize sleeping in cars and encampments for Kentuckians who have no other place to go, with fines of up to \$250 and up to 90 days in jail.

**The Safer KY Act would legally protect those who use physical force against unhoused people.** The bill would establish legal protections for property owners to use physical force against homeless people who they view as a threat.

We believe strongly in public safety for everyone—including the thousands of Kentuckians who enter homelessness each year. The state lacks enough shelter and housing to address their needs. House Bill 5, the Safer KY Act, is unnecessary, cruel, and does not address the root causes of homelessness. **The state should fund more housing and shelter, not decrease funding and access to these life-saving resources while increasing criminalization.**