

<https://psmag.com/economics/in-defense-of-rent-control>

<https://streeteasy.com/guides/renters-guide/what-is-the-difference-between-rent-controlled-and-rent-stabilized-apartments/> (difference btwn rent control and rent stabilized)

<https://ink.niche.com/upstairsdownstairs-debate-rent-control/>

(pros vs cons)

rent control

noun

1. government control and regulation of the amounts charged for rented housing.

The principal argument **against rent control** is that it tends to distort economic **incentives**, leading to inefficient distribution of resources. **Rent control** reduces the incentive of **landlords** to supply **rental** units. **Rental** units tend to be in scarce supply under **rent control**.

1988 UVA study- landlords no more likely to not keep up rent controlled apartment

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2FBF00658922#page-1>

In defense of rent control

A common (and much abused) justification for rent control is the right to housing, which is sometimes protected by the constitution.

Another justification is to correct market inefficiencies such as information asymmetry and high transaction costs. **Because of the high cost of moving, tenants can arguably be pressured by landlords to accept rent increases.** Tenants may also be unaware of the **real condition of units** until they move in. If the **tenant complains, the landlord may threaten to increase the rent.**

Standard contracts perform a service to both landlords and tenants. In many cases in modern society, the state intervenes in contractual relations between individuals in order to provide simplicity, clarity, and order. Both landlord and tenant are helped if standard provisions exist, for instance, which determine what should be agreed on - the initial rent, rent adjustments, date of payment, penalty for delays, conditions for eviction and such. These can provide both flexibility and security.

Rent control is an ethical dilemma that fights against the ideal economic situation. **Equity vs. efficiency.**

Rent control would help:

- to ensure affordable housing for low- and moderate-income workers who provide essential services and for the retired elderly who want to stay in their homes and communities.
 - Lower prices encourage long term habitation → values preserved in a community (sense of community also)
 - maintain diversity and stability in neighborhoods, which increase property values
 - Long-term tenants also materially improve and maintain properties and contribute to the preservation of buildings and the increase in property values
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- There is a lack of serious public housing funding → rent control might be the answer
 - Rent control allows people to tenants to live in their homes for a longer period of time because the cost would not be increasing over time, nor would it add up to an unrealistic amount for them to be paying. **LONG TERM-TENANTS have the incentive to keep their homes as desirable places to live → they have legitimate interest in staying in their apartments**
 - If you think that income diverse, stable neighborhoods where people are not forced to move every few years **is worth preserving**, then we all have an interest in stabilizing the neighborhood, and rent control is the answer to that.
 - ** renters are often criticized for not investing in their neighborhoods or houses → rent regulations give tenants a greater stake in their community and incentivize them to put time, energy, and money into their homes **

- Without rent control people get little return for contributing to community around them
- *NY housing lawyer Timothy Collins argues that New York's two largest building booms took place during times of strict rent controls: the 1920s and the post-war period between 1947 and 1965.
- Rent control has been a great source of affordable housing for MIDDLE- and LOW-INCOME households
- An economist found that housing construction in New Jersey fell by 52% in the areas that had rent regulation BUT the areas that did not have rent regulation fell by 88%
- When a statewide referendum to end rent control in MA happened in 1994, the vacancy rate decreased from 4% to only 2.9%, meanwhile, the median price of a two-bedroom apartment DOUBLED. Taking out rent control hardly changed apartment availability, and instead just increased cost.
- Taking out rent control and no longer allows mixed-income neighborhoods

EQUITY VS EFFICIENCY

“The real goal of rent control is protecting the **moral rights of occupancy**. Long-term tenants who contributed to this being a desirable place to live **have a legitimate interest in staying in their apartments**. If we think that income diverse, stable neighborhoods, where people are not forced to move every few years, [are worth preserving] then we **collectively have an interest in stabilizing** the neighborhood.”

LOOK DOWN FOR ACTUAL DEBATE:



Opening statement/ main arguments:

- Rent control is good :)
- It allows consumers to not be taken advantage of by landlords
- The presence of rent control can stabilize communities by allowing residents to live in their homes for a long time (longer time than without rent control), therefore motivating residents to make their homes desirable places to live.
- ensures affordable housing for low- and moderate-income workers who provide essential services and for the retired elderly who want to stay in their homes and communities.
- Lower prices encourage long term habitation → values preserved in a community (sense of community also)
- maintain diversity and stability in neighborhoods, **which increase property values**
- Long-term tenants also materially improve and maintain properties and contribute to the preservation of buildings and the increase in property values

Talk about how certain markets are ripe for rent control

Bring up moralism in the economy

Predatory vs paternal economic practices

Talk about how rent control helps **community involvement** and acts as a force against gentrification

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