



LATE NIGHT FOR THE LOMBARDI

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The Des Moines Register

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Democrats: Clinton vote sets a precedent



The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee voted Jan. 21 on two resolutions to hold Bill and Hillary Clinton in criminal contempt of subpoenas for information about Jeffrey Epstein. REUTERS FILE

Lawmakers see path to future Trump subpoena

Bart Jansen and Zachary Schermele

USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — After a successful pressure campaign to compel former President Bill Clinton to testify about accused sex trafficker Jeffrey Epstein, House Democrats are threatening to subpoena President Donald Trump for investigations of their own whenever they regain power.

A bipartisan effort in the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee to potentially hold Clinton and his wife, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, in contempt for defying subpoenas was notable for many reasons. One is that it illustrated a lack of unquestioned loyalty for the pair in a party they once ran more than two decades ago.

But it also gave a political gift to the party that currently has no control over the levers in Washington: A new precedent set by the Clinton depositions means the threat of a criminal contempt investigation will hang over Trump after he leaves the White House, and if Democrats regain control of the House after a future election.

Sitting and former presidents have testified before Congress, although the events have been rare. Democrats now contend they have permission to subpoena former presidents under threat of criminal contempt, a vote Trump didn't face when he was out of office during the investigation of the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol attack.

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Reader's Watchdog
Lee Rood
Des Moines Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

Legislators look to toughen towing law

Measures would add protections for customers

Iowa's law for abandoned vehicles, called by consumer advocates perhaps the weakest in the country, is getting another look at the state Legislature this year.

A pair of bills in the House and Senate, Senate Study Bill 3061 and House Study Bill 559, would plug in more protections for consumers.

They also attempt to make changes requested by Iowa's credit unions, who hold the liens on about 60% of vehicles sold in Iowa, while protecting towing businesses across the state. Also debated by lobbyists and legislators has been who should receive surplus proceeds from abandoned vehicle sales.

Some concerned about predatory towing practices in the Des Moines metro want Iowans who support changes in the towing law to contact their legislators.

One of the two bills advanced Feb. 4 in a Senate Commerce Committee subcommittee; another is scheduled to be discussed in a House Transportation Committee on Feb. 12.

A mix of groups — including the Iowa Credit Union League, Iowa Independent Automobile Dealers Association, the Iowa Association for Justice, AARP of Iowa, Veridian Credit Union and Enterprise Rental Cars — have logged support for one or both of the bills, which are still undergoing changes.

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Iowa mobile home tenants call for limits on rent hikes

Group seeks protection from sudden evictions

Kate Kealey

Des Moines Register

USA TODAY NETWORK

At Midwest Country Estates in Waukee, 20-year resident Matt Chapman enjoys tending his garden near the new roof he recently put on his home.

Six years ago, Chapman feared he wouldn't be able to afford his manufactured home after Utah-based Havenpark Capital purchased the park and announced that rents would increase by more than 65%. He started organizing residents to challenge what they considered "predatory" practices.

Since then, his mobile home park has undergone another change of ownership. The new management company adopted one-year, renewable leases, rather than month-to-month leases, and additional eviction protections.

Other Iowa renters aren't so lucky,

said Chapman, who co-chairs the Iowa Manufactured Home Residents Network, a nonprofit that advocates for manufactured homes residents.

During the Iowa Manufactured Housing Residents' Day at the Capitol on Feb. 5, organization called on state officials to enact legislation with more protection for renters.

"We have the best lease in the state, but everybody needs to have it," Chapman told the Register.

Advocates seek limits on rental increases, evictions

Mobile home residents and their allies are asking Iowa lawmakers to pass limits on rent increases and protection from evictions without cause.

One proposal, Senate File 2225, would require 180-day written notice before rent increases and limit hikes to once a year, unless landlords can justify more frequent increases.

See MOBILE HOME, Page 2A



Dana Luebbers shares her experience as a tenant at a manufactured home park in Iowa City at the Iowa Capitol on Feb. 5. One bill, Senate File 2225, would require 180-day written notice before rent increases. STEPHEN GRUBER-MILLER/THE REGISTER

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