



# City of Lima, Ohio

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David J. Berger, Mayor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—September 27, 2017

## Lima Mayor David Berger's Statement on Rental Registration

My office has received several calls and visits in reference to a letter about rental registration that has been circulating in our community. The letter puts out falsehoods about the rental registration program that has been proposed by my administration. It attempts to create an emotional political issue about a very real problem in our community and scare people into voting a certain way by explicitly stating that if I am re-elected rents will go up.

That statement is a complete falsehood, and this letter is the kind of divisive behavior we do not need in the city of Lima. The fact is we have an aging housing stock and the health of our neighborhoods requires us to take a more proactive and responsible approach to preserve that stock.

For several years now, I have been hearing from residents, homeowners and tenants, expressing concerns about the increasing number of single family housing units being converted into multi-tenant student housing by landlords who are charging per capita rents. I have also been hearing about the condition of rental properties with issues such as no heat, unsafe electrical wiring, leaking roofs, and other safety hazards that tenants are afraid to speak about publicly for fear of retaliation from their landlords.

Residents have asked that something be done because these conversions to multi-tenant student housing are very disruptive to stable neighborhoods. Council members have been asking that we look at what options might be considered. The staff and I began to assess what other communities have been doing and we developed a proposal for rental registration which in the spring we asked Lima City Council to consider.

The result has been a campaign against our proposal that is being engineered by my opponent to undercut any rational discussion about housing conditions. Read the text, and look at the bottom declaration that it is being paid for by the Cheney Campaign.

We are fighting to strengthen our neighborhoods! And just because you rent, doesn't mean you should be threatened and treated abusively. And if you are a homeowner, you shouldn't be forced to live next door or across the street from a house that is unsafe and unkempt or poorly managed.



While I recognize that this is a campaign season, I just don't think the health and safety of our residents should be politicized. Shame on Mr. Cheney, his team and any landlord that would threaten residents to get votes.

Lima City Council, I am asking you to seriously consider the problem before you and decide how you are going to address it. This is not something that as the Mayor I get to decide. I don't get to vote. It is Lima City Council's job to legislate. What I do know is, doing nothing should not be an option. If that is the option chosen, our neighborhoods will continue to decline, which in turn will lower property values and erode our ability to provide essential services.

Landlords play an important housing provider role in our community, as 54% of city residents are tenants who annually pump approximately \$300 million into the local economy. Our goal is to partner with responsible landlords as they play that role in our city. Those landlords that are not responsible should not be made to feel welcome here to drag down the rest of the community.

The Neighborhood Concerns Committee of Lima City Council will be meeting next Monday, October 2 @ 6 p.m. to discuss this issue. I encourage folks to attend and participate in the discussion.

See attached copy of Cheney letter to tenants.

To Lima Tenants:

**You must Vote in this Year's election for Mayor to protect your rights!**

Current legislation already proposed by **Mayor Berger will cause your rent to increase by a minimum of \$100.00** and **you will have to let the City enter your residence** to conduct an inspection of the entire interior of your residence.

Candidate **Keith Cheney** is against the Legislation and **will protect your rights** as a renter in the City of Lima.

**Keith Cheney will not allow** City inspectors to enter your residence and he **will not charge** a City fee that will raise your rent.

If you are not already registered to vote you can register to vote on line at [boe.allencountyohio.com](http://boe.allencountyohio.com) or in person at the Board of Elections, 204 N. Main Street. Voter registration ends on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Vote Keith Cheney for Lima Mayor!** Early Voting starts October 11 (you can vote in person daily at the Board of Elections, 204 N. Main Street, Lima) or you can Vote on Election Day November 7.

If you want information on Keith Cheney for Mayor Campaign visit his website: [www.keithcheney.com](http://www.keithcheney.com) or checkout his Facebook page at Cheney for Mayor.