

Editor,

As someone who believes that reasonable people can avoid litigation through honest negotiation, it is with great regret that I must file a lawsuit against the University of Iowa and the Board of Regents.

My intent is to bring sharp focus to a lack of oversight where the Regent's system has failed me and can easily harm others.

This issues stems from the poor maintenance of a University of Iowa rental property that went unaddressed despite months of complaint. I was exposed to large quantities of mold, became very ill, and developed a late-in-life mold allergy that continues to cause me misery today.

The worst thing, though, and the reason I am demanding a Regent's rule change, is that the University of Iowa simply painted over the mold and moved five students into the house the next day.

This unconscionable act has been rationalized at every step up the chain of command. Even the Board of Regents -- the rule makers charged with oversight -- has whitewashed the matter, declining to do an even cursory investigation and employing transparent fabrications to avoid taking responsibility.

Here's one of numerous untruths, expounded by Robert Donley, the Executive Director of the Iowa Board of Regents, that exposes both a keen lack of integrity and a cavalier attitude towards the Regents' guardianship responsibilities:

"... you requested approval to move in to the property immediately after the University's purchase in October 2007, leaving virtually no time for the University to evaluate or service the facility."

This blame-the-victim whopper would get a chuckle from even the most calloused landlord.

I'm not asking a lot, just...

- that the University takes full responsibility for the mismanagement of their property
- that I be reimbursed my current and future out-of-pocket expenses
- that my stuff -- currently stored in a climate controlled shed -- be restored or replaced
- and, most importantly, that Regents rules are changed to allow third party inspectors (city and county) to scrutinize Regents' properties

This last point is important: the current situation has the fox guarding the hen house. My complaints went unaddressed for months, with at least one UI employee brazenly lying about the problem. City and county health and housing inspectors refused to get involved because of a Regent's rule prohibiting third-party inspections of their homes. Tenants of the University of Iowa would be better protected by having a system of checks and balances.

It is a shame that common citizens and decent employees have to resort to lawsuits to have their grievances addressed in the system. At last count, I have raised this issue with more than

two dozen responsible parties, including UI president Sally Mason, ombudspersons, a gaggle of state legislators, and gotten nothing but soulless shrugs and spineless hand-wringing. I was even denied the right to present this matter to the Board of Regents.

As a loyal employee of the University of Iowa who has worked assiduously to build the institution and represent it in the best possible manner everywhere I work around the world, it grieves me to be brought to this point. I have done everything in my power to resolve this issue through formal and less public channels. However, the statute of limitations is about to run out and I'm tired of waiting for someone with a soul to step up to the plate.

I suspect that there must be some sort of systemic reward for behaving the way the University of Iowa and the Board of Regents do, but I am not one to walk away from an injustice. Lawyer friends tell me that I can expect to endure the full wrath of the State's sizable legal arsenal for years to come. Whether or not I prevail in court, Iowa taxpayers need to know the truth.

More information, including photos and email transcripts, can be found at this Web site.

<http://cliffmissen.com/219melrose/>

Best regards,

-- Cliff Missen