

CARRILLON HOUSE TENANT'S ASSOCIATION v. D.C. RENTAL HOUSING COMMISSION, 793 A.2<sup>nd</sup> 461 (2002)

Court: D.C. Court of Appeals, opinion by Farrell, A.J.

Judicial History: Tenants' association sought judicial review of Rental Housing Commission's (RHC) approval of rent ceiling surcharge for 300 months of interest on capital improvement loan obtained by landlord.

Facts: At issue are two competing interpretations of Section 210 of the Rental Housing Act, which governs the entitlement of a housing provider to recover funds expended for capital improvements made to rental housing, without permanently increasing the base rent paid by tenants. The Tenants Association contended that the statute in question allows only for recoupment of ninety-six months (or eight years) of interest on such loans as opposed to the 300 months interest allowed by the RHC. The RHC rejected this argument because it did not provide the housing provider with recovery of all costs associated with the capital improvement in the manner approved by the statute. Tenants Association then brought this appeal.

Holding: The Court of Appeals held that a residential landlord is entitled to recover, through a rent ceiling surcharge, the total interest expense for a capital improvement loan obtained by the landlord, even if the loan term exceeds the 96-month amortization period for the surcharge.

Reasoning: While statutory words are to be accorded their ordinary meaning absent indication of a contrary legislative intent, statutory meaning is to be derived, not from the reading of a single sentence or section, but from consideration of an entire enactment against the backdrop of its policies and objectives.

Decision: Affirmed.