

HOUSE BILL 689

C8

7lr1216
CF 7lr3052

By: **Delegates Valentino–Smith, Angel, Hettleman, Krimm, Lierman, McKay,
Patterson, Pena–Melynk, Sydnor, A. Washington, and M. Washington**

Introduced and read first time: February 1, 2017

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Department of Housing and Community Development – Rental Assistance**
3 **Programs – Duration of Assistance**

4 FOR the purpose of specifying that payments to certain low–income households by the
5 Secretary of Housing and Community Development through the Rental Allowance
6 Program be made for not less than a certain number of consecutive years, subject to
7 a certain condition; altering certain criteria concerning time frames for assistance
8 for certain rental assistance programs; declaring the intent of the General Assembly;
9 and generally relating to rental assistance programs in the Department of Housing
10 and Community Development.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
12 Article – Housing and Community Development
13 Section 4–1403 and 4–1405
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2006 Volume and 2016 Supplement)

16 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
17 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

18 **Article – Housing and Community Development**

19 4–1403.

20 (a) The Department shall administer the Rental Allowance Program to assist
21 low–income households that are homeless or at risk of being homeless by providing housing
22 assistance payments to or on behalf of eligible households.

23 (b) The Secretary shall establish:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (1) income limits for eligibility of low-income households not exceeding
2 30% of the State or area median income, whichever is higher; and

3 (2) minimum standards for eligible dwelling units.

4 (c) The Secretary shall establish the amount of payments made through the
5 Rental Allowance Program, taking into account factors identified in § 4-1405(d) of this
6 subtitle.

7 **(D) PAYMENTS MADE THROUGH THE RENTAL ALLOWANCE PROGRAM TO**
8 **AN ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLD SHALL BE MADE FOR NOT LESS THAN 4 CONSECUTIVE**
9 **YEARS, SUBJECT TO AN ANNUAL REDETERMINATION THAT THE HOUSEHOLD**
10 **CONTINUES TO MEET ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.**

11 **[(d)] (E)** Eligible uses of payments may include rent, security deposits, utilities,
12 and other housing-related expenses.

13 **[(e)] (F)** The Department may administer the Rental Allowance Program by
14 providing monthly housing assistance payments to or on behalf of eligible households
15 directly or through political subdivisions, their local housing agencies or departments, or
16 nonprofit organizations.

17 **[(f)] (G)** Funds appropriated to serve low-income households through the
18 Rental Allowance Program may not be used for other programs authorized under this
19 subtitle.

20 **[(g)] (H)** The Department may adopt regulations to carry out the Rental
21 Allowance Program, including time frames for assistance and other criteria the Secretary
22 considers appropriate.

23 4-1405.

24 (a) The Department may administer the programs by providing monthly housing
25 assistance payments to or on behalf of eligible households directly or through political
26 subdivisions, their local housing agencies or departments, or nonprofit organizations.

27 (b) In establishing the programs, the Department shall consult with, as
28 appropriate:

29 (1) the Department of Human Resources;

30 (2) the Department of Disabilities; or

31 (3) any other unit of State or local government.

32 (c) The Secretary shall establish criteria for the programs, including:

- 1 (1) income limits for eligibility of households;
- 2 (2) time frames **OF NOT LESS THAN 4 YEARS** for assistance;
- 3 (3) monthly assistance amounts;
- 4 (4) standards for eligible dwelling units, including types of units,
5 inspection standards, and rent limits;
- 6 (5) eligible uses of assistance payments which may include security
7 deposits, utilities, and other housing related expenses; and
- 8 (6) any other criteria the Secretary considers appropriate.
- 9 (d) In establishing the program criteria, the Secretary may consider factors that
10 include:
- 11 (1) household size and expected average income;
- 12 (2) regional variations throughout the State;
- 13 (3) typical housing costs and expenses;
- 14 (4) relevant standards and definitions established for State and federal
15 housing programs;
- 16 (5) housing needs of eligible households and the expected duration of the
17 housing needs; and
- 18 (6) equitable distribution of funds statewide.
- 19 (e) The Secretary may establish different criteria for different programs.

20 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That it is the intent of the General
21 Assembly that the Department of Housing and Community Development structure a
22 schedule of rental allowance payments made through the Rental Allowance Program to
23 ensure that a household assisted under the Rental Allowance Program not pay more than
24 30% of its verifiable annual income for rent and utility costs.

25 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
26 October 1, 2017.