



Empowerment. Integration. Equality.

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www.DisabilityRightsMD.org

JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE

February 19, 2020

HB 797 – EVICTION DATA COLLECTION

Position: SUPPORT

Disability Rights Maryland (DRM – formerly Maryland Disability Law Center) is the Protection & Advocacy agency in Maryland, mandated to advance the civil rights of people with disabilities. DRM works to increase opportunities for Marylanders with disabilities to be part of their communities and live in safe, decent, secure, affordable and accessible housing.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 797. DRM supports HB 797, which is a common sense bill that mandates that, “the State Court Administrator to collect, maintain, provide certain access to, and, beginning on or before a certain date, make and publish a quarterly report in a certain manner on certain information related to certain warrants of restitution and writs of possession; providing for a delayed effective date; and generally relating to warrant of restitution and writ of possession data and reporting by the State Court Administrator.”

People with disabilities have historically been forced into institutional settings, including state hospitals, nursing homes, and the criminal justice system.¹ This history contributes to persons with disabilities facing numerous and substantial barriers to fair and affordable housing from both the private and public housing sectors. In 2017, 57% of all housing discrimination cases filed with Fair Housing Offices, HUD, and the DOJ were based on disability.² Increased

¹ K. C. Lakin, S. Larson, P. Salmi, and A. Webster (2010). *Residential Services for Persons with Developmental Disabilities: Status and Trends through 2009*, University of Minnesota, <http://rtc.umn.edu/docs/risp2009.pdf>

² National Fair Housing Alliance, *2018 Fair Housing Trends Report*, <https://nationalfairhousing.org/2018-fair-housing-trends-report/>



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eviction rates lead to housing instability, which in turn, lead to higher rates of institutionalization and inpatient hospitalization for persons with disabilities.³

In regards, to the collection of eviction data- accurate and publicly available data is needed in order to monitor whether discrimination against persons with disabilities is occurring. Preventing discrimination in evictions requires reliable data from those who are enforcing the eviction process. Who is being evicted, and why are they being evicted, are necessary questions to prevent discrimination. Without this data, we do not know who is being impacted.

We do not believe this should be considered burdensome on the System Administrator. Currently, anyone with a criminal, civil, or family court history need only go on the website Maryland Case Search and search their name for their records. We do not see why evictions should be treated differently than any other court proceeding.

For all of these reasons, DRM urges a favorable report on HB 797. Thank you for considering our views. Please do not hesitate to contact Corinne Warren at 410-727-6352, ext. 2472 or by e-mail at CorinneW@disabilityrightsmd.org.

³ Kushel MB, Vittinghoff E, Haas JS. Factors associated with the health care utilization of homeless persons. JAMA. 2001;285:200–6.