



**TESTIMONY FOR SB0154
LANDLORD AND TENANT – EVICTION ACTION – RIGHT TO CONSEL**

Bill Sponsor: Senator Lam

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0154 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our Coalition members support the rights of tenants. Low-income tenants are particularly vulnerable to landlords who allow their buildings to become dilapidated and unsafe. For tenants like these, retaliation for demanding repairs be made or informing the landlord of lead poisoning hazards is usually eviction. For these tenants, that fear often makes them live in sub-standard conditions.

This bill, if passed, would help mitigate that fear by establishing a Right to Counsel in Evictions Coordinator to organize and direct services and resources for tenants who are evicted in this manner. This alone will help give those who are evicted a path forward, and support when they need it most.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.