



Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network

MSCAN

AARP Maryland

*Alzheimer's
Association,
Maryland Chapters*

*Baltimore Jewish
Council*

Catholic Charities

*Central Maryland
Ecumenical Council*

Church of the Brethren

*Episcopal Diocese of
Maryland*

*Housing Opportunities
Commission of
Montgomery County*

*Jewish Community
Relations Council of
Greater Washington*

*Lutheran Office on
Public Policy in
Maryland*

*Maryland Association of
Area Agencies on Aging*

*Maryland Catholic
Conference*

*Mental Health
Association of Maryland*

Mid-Atlantic LifeSpan

*National Association of
Social Workers,
Maryland Chapter*

Presbytery of Baltimore

*The Coordinating
Center*

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SB 724

Mortgage Servicers – Requirements and Prohibitions During and After a State of Emergency and Catastrophic Health Emergency (Foreclosure Relief Act of 2021)

**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
March 2, 2021**

Support

MSCAN is a statewide coalition of advocacy groups, service providers, faith-based and mission-driven organizations that supports policies that meet the housing and care needs of Maryland's low and moderate-income senior citizens.

MSCAN supports SB 724, which will extend a foreclosure moratorium through the state of emergency, require mortgage servicers to grant forbearance relief, ban late fees throughout the state of emergency, prohibit servicers from furnishing negative credit information to consumer reporting agencies related to mortgage payments during the state of emergency and up to one year after, and creates a private right of action for homeowners and small landlords to sue mortgage servicers who violate the law.

A growing number of seniors are burdened with mortgage debt. Over 41% of senior homeowners over 65 have a mortgage today.¹ Unfortunately, over the past 10 years, those in their 60s saw their mortgage debt increase by 471%.² Many seniors wish to age in place, but low-income senior homeowners struggling to pay mortgages are in a precarious position that has only been exacerbated by the pandemic.

SB 724 will reduce housing insecurity among low-income seniors in Maryland by codifying foreclosure protections and relief. COVID-19 has laid to bare longstanding inequities in our systems, including ongoing insecurity for low-income homeowners. Stable housing is a cornerstone of stable families, and this bill has many important provisions that protect older adults in Maryland from foreclosures, as well as holds mortgage services accountable to adhere to moratorium and forbearance orders during the public health crisis. In particular, banning foreclosures during the duration of the pandemic, requiring forbearance relief, and prohibiting undue late fees and are tangible steps that will provide relief for senior homeowners. We know seniors thrive in economically secure households with stable housing, and thriving seniors means a thriving future for our state.

For the reasons stated above, MSCAN urges a favorable report on SB 724.
Thank you for your consideration.

¹ Urban Institute. 2019. Housing and Housing Finance. <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/american-seniors-prefer-age-place-whats-right-place#:~:text=Regardless%20of%20whether%20they%20choose,just%2021%20percent%20in%201989>.

² CNBC. 2020. Debt Among Oldest Americans Skyrockets. <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/02/26/debt-among-older-americans-increases-dramatically-in-past-two-decades.html>