



Salisbury Area Property Owners Association
P.O. Box 527 Salisbury, MD 21803

February 22, 2022

c/o Delegates Adams, McKay, Thiam, and Wivell
House Office Bldg., Room 310
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Delegates Adams, McKay, Thiam, and Wivell:

We're writing today to lend strong support towards House Bill HB1309 Landlord and Tenant – Repossession for Failure to Pay Rent – Procedures affecting rental evictions in Wicomico County.

We support HB1309 to the benefit of all parties involved for a much safer, more efficient, and more compassionate means for the repossession of property during the execution of a Warrant of Restitution while at the same time respecting our former resident's dignity and personal property.

The current eviction process, as mandated in subsection 8-401(d)(1)(i) of the Real Property Article, requires any remaining property in a rental unit to be physically removed from the premises and placed outside in order to finalize the eviction process. This process involves Sheriff's Deputies on location and can take several hours while the property is removed. In addition, the chattels are required to remain there for a minimum of 48 hours, during which time many items of value are pilfered by others; while papers and miscellaneous other items can be found strewn throughout the neighborhood. Additionally, medications can be lost or stolen putting the former resident in a dangerous and critical condition without much-needed medications and putting the general public at risk as some medications can be highly dangerous if not taken in the appropriate dosages. .

The Landlord and Tenant – Repossession for Failure to Pay Rent – Procedures being supported would allow the owner or their resident agent, after all proper notices and legal procedures have run their course, to appear on the day of the scheduled eviction and secure the remaining abandoned property inside the premises rather than disposing of it outdoors, under the supervision of the Sheriff's Department.

This proposed process ensures the following improvements and safeguards:

- ✓ Personal dignity is maintained; less exposure to ridicule and/or embarrassment for the former residents.
- ✓ Better protection from theft and/or damages of the former resident's personal property or the third-party leased property for which the tenants can be held responsible. These are items often found inside the homes.
- ✓ Protection against public blight whereby property is currently required to remain on the lawn for 48 hours, subject to wind and rain.
- ✓ Resident being able to maintain control of critical medications as well as public protection from unknown medications entering the community.
- ✓ Reduction in the amount of time the Sheriff's deputies are required to remain on the premises during the eviction process. Currently, deputies are required to maintain surveillance for the duration of the eviction, a process which normally takes several hours.

The proposed HB1309 legislation would allow the eviction process to remain discreet as a benefit to the former resident, prevent the property from exposure to wind, rain and theft, medications control, and reduce the time the Sheriff's Deputies have to remain on site to a matter of minutes, rather than hours – allowing them to promptly return to their numerous other civic duties.

We understand that action by the General Assembly is necessary to authorize the proposed alternative procedure. We thank you for your time and hope you can appreciate what we consider to be a great benefit to those involved in this process and to our community as a whole.

Respectfully,



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