

Sharron Wise

HB 428 – Community Schools - Rental Assistance for Community School Families  
Program Hearing on February 6, 2024

My name is Sharron Wise, and I am a mother living with my family in Baltimore City. I am asking the Committee to support HB 428, which would provide eviction prevention funds for families whose students are in community schools.

My youngest was born a few months ago, and I am currently on unpaid maternity leave from my job as a pre-school teacher to take care of them. I live in a single-family home that was divided into two apartments. Currently, I'm in a dispute with my landlord because I am being excessively charged for BGE services, but I am seeking legal help to fix this issue. When the weather started getting cold last year, I began to fall behind on rent because I had to keep my kids warm and the lights on while dealing with these excessive bills. To make matters worse, in September, I was in a car accident and lost wages because I was out of work for a few days. And then in October, my partner and I broke up, so now I am solely responsible for all of my family's bills.

Eviction prevention funds would greatly benefit me and my family. It would keep my children in their current schools and make sure they have a safe and consistent place to call home. My seven-year-old loves her teacher and her school, and I know changing her school would negatively affect her ability to learn and grow.

Just a little help with my rent to get past these financial setbacks would keep my family together. If we're forced to move, it will be very difficult to find somewhere to accommodate all of us – especially in the same school neighborhood where we currently live. I go back to work next week and, if I had the help of rental assistance, I would be current on my rent and be able to maintain monthly payments. Helping my students get a good, stable education is very important to me, so I ask the Committee to give a favorable report on HB 428.

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