

HB0477\_AnnaRubin\_FAV  
Feb. 9, 2024  
Anna Rubin  
Columbia, MD 21045

HB0477\_AnnaRubin\_FAVORABLE  
Just Cause Eviction

TO: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Dr. Anna Rubin

My name is Anna Rubin. I am a resident of District 13. I am submitting this testimony supporting HB0477, Just Cause Eviction. I am a member of Columbia Jewish Congregation and act as the co-chair of its Social Action Committee and a member of the CJC Standing for Racial Justice Committee. I am also co-chair of the Indivisible Howard County Immigration Action Team. I have always had the privilege of a roof over my head. When I moved to Howard County in 2002, I was able to buy a home and maintain a safe and comfortable home for my son. But I have watched the numbers of renters grow in my county and their hold on their dwellings to be precarious because of the shortage of housing and the power that landlords hold over tenants.

Ancient Jewish texts are full of laws about keeping homes safe for the people who live in them. The prophet Micah understood that housing is more than a roof over one's head and that to deny a person safe housing is not only robbing them in the present but also robbing their family for generations to come.

Every person, regardless of race or income, should have a safe and stable home. But some landlords think that their own profit is more important than safety and stability for Black and brown renters, and they let the buildings they own fall into disrepair, or throw whole families out on the street to try to squeeze more money out of the next renters.

- Nobody should lose their home because of the whims of their landlord.
- Landlords often retaliate against tenants who organize for their rights, demand that repairs be made, or complain about violations of laws about safe housing conditions. Sometimes this retaliation takes the form of refusing to renew their leases.
- “Just cause” laws protect tenants from this kind of retaliation, and from being evicted for no reason at all. These laws promote housing stability for tenants and neighborhoods.
- This bill would allow counties to adopt “just cause” laws that meet local needs.

I respectfully urge this committee to return an favorable report on SB0477.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Anna Rubin

