



HB 477 -FAV

Jolene Ivey
Chair
Council District 5

"Serving the People of Prince George's County!"

January 23, 2024

Environment and Transportation Committee
251 House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: SUPPORT – Just Cause Eviction legislation for 2024

Dear members of the Environment & Transportation Committee and the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

Over one-third of Maryland families rent their homes, and our residents deserve strong protections to ensure their stability and well-being. From access to employment, food, transportation, and education, an eviction of any family is debilitating. It's time for our Maryland laws and policies to uphold the value of stable housing as a fundamental human right.

Under current state law, with just 60 days' notice, a landlord can refuse to renew a lease and evict a residential tenant for any reason or no reason at all. Thousands of tenants lose their homes through this process, and they must then find new housing, new schools for their children, new transportation routes, and sometimes new jobs.

These evictions put a tremendous burden on renters, with a disproportionately heavy burden on low-wage renters, who have very few other housing options in an increasingly unaffordable housing market. Families of color, single-parent families, and immigrant families face these burdens and hardships the most. Currently, wages do not align with the costs of the housing market. When these families cannot renew their leases, they often find themselves stressed trying to find another housing option suitable for them. Some families can even find themselves facing homelessness because they cannot find another housing option.

Under current state law, counties in Maryland do not have the authority to address Just Cause Eviction. However, since counties have an important and unique interest in maintaining their residents' housing stability, they should have the authority to implement Just Cause Eviction and decide for their communities. The 2023 Just Cause Eviction legislation, would have given authority to Maryland counties and Baltimore City to implement Just Cause Eviction and determine the appropriate circumstances in which a lease can be non-renewed.

Numerous counties, cities, and states throughout the country have adopted Just Cause Eviction laws, including Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, New Jersey, and Washington State. There is no evidence that Just Cause eviction laws have a negative impact on the housing market in any of these jurisdictions.

The **Prince George's County Council** urge the Maryland General Assembly to pass Just Cause Eviction legislation in 2024 to provide authority to local jurisdictions to pass local Just Cause Eviction policies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jolene Ivey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jolene Ivey
Council Chair