



Young Democrats of Maryland

HB477/SB644 - Landlord Tenant - Residential Leases & Holdover Tenancies - Local Just Cause Termination Provisions Environment and Transportation - 2/13/2024 SUPPORT

Chairman Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this priority bill for the Young Democrats of Maryland. YDM represents the next generation of Marylanders and seeks to advance policies which will allow Maryland youth to thrive.

Young Democrats of Maryland strongly support HB 477, Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Just Cause Termination Provisions. Simply put, this bill would allow Maryland counties to adopt local laws prohibiting landlords from evicting renters or failing to renew leases without just cause. HB477 will promote housing stability, reduce evictions, and provide renters with much needed protections, ensuring that more young Marylanders will have steady housing.

Housing insecurity remains a crucial, top-of-mind issue for all Marylanders, and young Marylanders in particular. Many young adults struggle to afford rent on their own and must double up, couch surf, or live out of their vehicle in their early professional years, all facets of youth housing insecurity. Even if a young person is able to rent a unit on her own, eviction and possible homelessness are always a possibility when no legal protections are in place. Youth housing insecurity is a particular challenge for vulnerable and marginalized young people, including LGBTQ+ youth and those leaving the foster care or juvenile justice systems. Supportive housing protections like just cause eviction would help these young people find their footing on the pathway to adulthood, [maintain their employment](#), [reduce recidivism](#), and [lower rates of homelessness](#).

Just cause eviction laws protect renters from hostile landlords, and from being evicted for no valid or lawful reason. Evicting a person or family from their home is an enormously serious action, and it should not be done on a whim or without a lawful reason. Currently in Maryland, landlords can do exactly that. In order to address this predatory and sometimes discriminatory practice, the General Assembly must take

action. For these reasons, we respectfully ask for your support for HB477 and strongly urge a favorable committee report.

Sincerely,

Melissa Bender
YDM Vice President for Political Affairs
Chair, YDM Legislative and Policy Committee

Mark Brewster II and Garrett Hill
YDM Legislative and Policy Committee