

SB0635_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

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TESTIMONY ON SB#/0635 – FAVORABLE

**Landlords and Prospective Tenants - Residential Leases - Criminal History Review
(Maryland Fair Chance in Housing Act)**

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0635, Landlords and Prospective Tenants - Residential Leases - Criminal History Review (Maryland Fair Chance in Housing Act)

If the goal of incarceration is rehabilitation, every obstacle we place on former inmates returning to society as contributing members damages all of us. Landlords can use the former status as a reason to deny those former inmates who have paid their debts to society needed housing to continue their movement towards being a productive resident of Maryland.

This bill will place prohibitions and limitations on how the criminal history of an individual is used to deny their application to become a tenant. It will require that the denial be documented in writing stating any reason for that denial. If we, as a society, want to create contributing members within society we should take the steps this bill mandates to further that goal.

We can remove the blocks that exist in letting someone with a criminal history find suitable housing for themselves and their families.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass SB0635.