



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Senator William C. Smith Jr. , Chair
Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, Vice Chair
Judicial Proceedings Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus
DATE: 2/28/24
RE: SB354 - Montgomery County and Prince George's County-
Rent Court Workforce Solutions Pilot Program

The MLLC supports SB354 - Montgomery County and Prince George's County- Rent Court Workforce Solutions Pilot Program

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of SB354.

In 2021 Latinos made up more than 18% of renters occupied households in Montgomery and 63% of Latino renters were considered cost-burdened (expending 30 percent or more of income on rent).¹ Members of the black and Latino community are twice as likely to rent than their white counterparts.² In Maryland, Latino families comprise 28.3% of tenants behind on rent.³ Due to the disproportionate threats of evictions faced by the Latino community, Latinos (and Blacks) experience evictions at higher rates than other groups due to missed rent.⁴

This bill will establish a Rent Court Workforce Solutions Pilot Program in Montgomery County and Prince George's County to provide tenants facing a failure to pay rent case with workforce resources and information on workforce development and employment opportunities. This pilot program will be administered by a "designated organization" and the District Court will allow a representative from the designated organization to operate in a District Court at the Courthouse on days in which failure to pay rent cases are heard. Provided that both parties agree, the court may grant a continuance or stay in eviction to allow the individual an opportunity to participate in the Workforce Solutions Program. The designated organization shall provide the Governor and the General Assembly the numbers of individuals connected to workforce development programs or employment opportunities each January 1, beginning on January 1, 2026.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on SB354.

¹ [\(Office of Legislative Oversight\)](#)

² [Politico](#)

³ [The Baltimore Sun](#)

⁴ [Eviction Lab](#)