

Bill Title: HB0477 Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause Termination Provisions.

Position: SUPPORT (FAV)

To: Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: Tonia Chestnut, External Affairs Chair, on behalf of Enclave Tenant Association (ETA)

Dear members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

My name is Tonia Chestnut and I am the External Affairs Chair of the Enclave Tenant Association (ETA). I am writing on behalf of the ETA and am submitting this **testimony in support of HB0477 Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause Termination Provisions**. The Enclave Tenant Association represents thousands of renters in the Enclave apartments in Silver Spring, MD. Our association formed due to continuous negligence, compromising tenant safety and living conditions that people who live in the Enclave endure every day because of Hampshire Properties and Rose Valley Management. ETA has sent demand letters, emails, placed phone calls and even rallied against the Enclave management and now we are pushing our support behind "Good Cause."

For years and to this day, families in our buildings have dealt with terrible living conditions. Families within our community endure deplorable living conditions characterized by infestations of mice, rats, and roaches, which have not only damaged property but also eroded the quality of life for residents. Such conditions make hosting guests an embarrassment and raise concerns about the health of our children. No matter how much maintenance has been contacted their exterminators are not able to eradicate this problem in many apartments. There are other tenants in the Enclave who experience flooding and leaks in their apartments. Some are from the constant pipes that burst in the buildings; others are from sewage that backs up in the pipes which then floods the apartments; and there are also other maintenance issues such as the heating/cooling units leaking or toilets overflowing due to pieces not being replaced on time. Additionally, the mailboxes in all three buildings were broken into and because the security cameras do not work no one can be held responsible. There are also no security cameras in the direct area of the mail room. During this time many tax checks and other important items were stolen from tenants' mailboxes. Despite all these issues, our property management has been negligent and have not made any honest efforts to remedy these maintenance problems. Many renters in our building are afraid to speak up for fear of retaliation - they are afraid of being unjustly evicted.

The current law in Maryland allows for landlords to remove tenants from their homes without needing to provide reason. This creates fear and disempowers tenants from holding landlords and property managers accountable for upkeep and fixing maintenance issues. As a result, many tenants have to tolerate deplorable living conditions. HB0477 would allow renters to exercise their rights and engage with landlords, property managers, and government agencies without fear of retaliation. For this reason, the Enclave Tenant Association urges a favorable report on HB0477.