

CANDACE MCLAREN LANHAM
Chief Deputy Attorney General

CAROLYN A. QUATTROCKI
Deputy Attorney General

LEONARD J. HOWIE III
Deputy Attorney General

CHRISTIAN E. BARRERA
Chief Operating Officer

ZENITA WICKHAM HURLEY
Chief, Equity, Policy, and Engagement

PETER V. BERNS
General Counsel



ANTHONY G. BROWN
Attorney General

STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION

WILLIAM D. GRUHN
Chief
Consumer Protection Division

Writer's Direct Dial No.
410-576-6986
kwilponewelborn@oag.state.md.us

April 1, 2024

To: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: Kira Wilpone-Welborn, Assistant Attorney General
Consumer Protection Division

Re: House Bill 477 – Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies -
Local Good Cause Termination Provisions (SUPPORT)

The Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General (the “Division”) supports House Bill 477 sponsored by Delegates Wilkins, Stewart, Addison, Allen, Boyce, Foley, Healey, Holmes, Lehman, J. Long, Love, Ruth and Terrasa. Presently, pursuant to Real Property Article § 8-402, a landlord can elect to not renew a tenancy for any reason at the end of a residential lease term. House Bill 477 seeks to permit local jurisdictions the freedom to adopt local “good cause” policies that would require a landlord to have good cause before electing not to renew a tenancy and displacing the tenant from the rental unit and the community.

Good cause requirements for lease non-renewal reduce unexpected displacements, providing tenants with security in their residences and communities and allowing tenants to avoid financially expensive disruptions in their living, working, and schooling. As a result, the American Bar Association in its eviction policy guidelines has recognized the importance of

good cause in eviction legislation and recommended that all states and localities adopt good cause principals in their residential lease and eviction laws.¹

House Bill 477 is tailored to permit local jurisdictions the flexibility to adopt housing policies that are beneficial to their residents and communities. For these reasons, the Division requests that the Judicial Proceedings Committee give House Bill 477 a favorable report.

cc: The Honorable Jheanelle K. Wilkins, *et al.*
Members, Judicial Proceedings Committee

¹ See https://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_aid_indigent_defense/sclaid-task-force-on-eviction--housing-stability--and-equity/guidelines-eviction/guideline-9/.