



SB 46 - Real Property – Wrongful Detainer
Hearing before the House Judiciary Committee on March 25, 2025
Position: OPPOSED (UNF)

Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility (CPSR) is a state-wide evidenced-based, organization of over 900 physicians, and other health professionals and supporters, that addresses the existential public health threats: nuclear weapons, the climate crisis and the issues of pollution and toxics' effect on health as seen through the intersectional lens of environmental, social and racial justice. As an organization founded by physicians, we understand that **prevention is far superior to treatment in reducing costs, illness, injury, deaths and suffering. Preventing evictions saves lives. Protecting rights for renters facing evictions upholds social, economic and racial justices.**

CPSR is a part of Renters United Maryland, which strongly opposes SB 46 and urges an unfavorable report. SB 46 would deny residents of their constitutional rights in a “wrongful detainer” eviction process – and could result in an eviction mere days after filing a complaint. SB 46 would have the unintended consequence of evicting lawful residents who would not have a meaningful chance to challenge the eviction. **This means more homelessness for survivors of domestic violence when the abuser files for eviction; more homelessness for lawful tenants subjected to predatory landlords; and more homelessness for families caught in rental scams.**

Opposing SB 46 is important to CPSR because of the strong evidence linking housing and health. It is one of the most basic social determinants.¹ of health. A recent review of the best designed studies looked at the harms from eviction filings and evictions on children from birth to age 9². In older children and adolescents, a history of multiple moves has been associated with mental health problems later in life including violence and suicide.³ A study from 2021 showing the relationship between evictions and depression add to evidence of the role of evictions in population health inequality⁴ Homelessness can be deadly.⁵ The homeless have a 5-10 x higher mortality than the housed with average life expectancy was 53 years on one study. For all of these reasons, alternatives to eviction should be sought and surely a bill which green lights separating people from their housing without due process is dangerous as well as unjust.

Housing is health! Chesapeake PSR **urges an unfavorable report on SB46.**

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¹ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2667710>

² <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2803667>

³ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0749379716301180>

⁴ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8045672/>

⁵ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternalmedicine/fullarticle/2687991>

