

HB 0085 - SUPPORT

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Corporations and Associations - Cooperative Limited Equity Housing

Corporations -Establishment: Economic Matters Committee

February 10th, 2026

Dear Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

My name is Sasha Olinick and I am the President of the Leeland Tenant Association. The Leeland Tenant Association is: “ a group of neighbors committed to nurturing the sustainability of our larger community, keeping our home safe and affordable, and supporting each other’s well-being.” In 2021 our landlord put our building at 112 Lee Ave in Takoma Park up for sale which threatened to displace all of the 15 low income households living there. In October of 2022 , the Leeland Tenant Association, utilized Takoma Park’s Tenant Opportunity to Purchase law to successfully acquire the property.

We are a culturally diverse community; half of us identify as non-white, with roots in El Salvador, Palestine, and the Philippines, to name a few.

We are artists, activists, teachers, environmentalists.

We are former federal workers. We are nonprofit leaders. Award-winning filmmakers live here. Part-time poets live here.

Our interests range from soccer to sock puppets, roller derby to belly dancing to bees. We have brought Shakespeare to detention centers and prisons, and nonverbal theatre to toddlers.

Original musicals were written here, to give LGBTQ youth a “happily ever after.”

A cancer battle was fought and won from this building, with the support of this community.

A neurodivergent child is growing up here, with neighbors who help look out for them, who don’t mind the noise they make.

We are 12 years old, going to school down the hill.

We are 77 years old, hoping to age in place.

These apartment units are also recording studios, theaters, classrooms, offices.

These apartment units are homes, where people who likely would not otherwise be able to, can proudly call themselves residents of Montgomery County, of Takoma Park.

We are storytellers, and we are Takoma Park's stories.

We are 15 units of affordable housing in a safe, walkable neighborhood.

We are The Leeland.

The LTA's intention has always been to convert the building to a limited equity coop, ensuring it would remain affordable and owned by the residents in perpetuity. Although more than 90 limited equity coops thrive in the District of Columbia, there are none in the state of Maryland. We soon learned the reason why: the existing state laws make the creation of a limited equity coop confusing, expensive and time-consuming. HB 0085 would simplify the process and allow more tenant associations to follow our lead. This bill, were it to become law, would create another tool to stem the growing housing crisis within the state of Maryland.

I urge a favorable report on HB 0085.