



LOCAL  
ACCURATE  
TRUSTED

January 20, 2020

Chairman William C. Smith, Jr.  
2 East Miller Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Senator Smith,

On behalf of the 1,000 members of the Coastal Association of REALTORS®, the leading real estate trade association on the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland, I write in support of HB0227/SB0176, Wicomico County – Landlord and Tenant – Repossession for Failure to Pay Rent – Procedures. The proposed legislation not only provides for more efficient eviction procedures for our members who operate rentals in Wicomico County, it also provides increased protections for consumers, reduces blight in our neighborhoods, and frees up local law enforcement so they may tend to our communities and residents.

Existing state law requires a landlord to remove a tenant's belongings on the day of the eviction. Those belongings are placed outside for two days, during which time they are a blight to the neighborhood, they are pilfered by passersby, and they are vulnerable to the elements. After two days, all items are removed by the landlord and are transported to a landfill, donated, or disposed of by some other legal means. During the eviction, the presence of a Wicomico County Sheriff's Deputy is required to ensure removal of all belongings from the property occurs without incident. In some cases, this process can take several hours.

The proposed legislation provides the tenant with 14 days' notice prior to the eviction that they must remove their belongings from the property. If their belongings are still in the rental on the day of eviction, the landlord and Sheriff's Deputy simply change the locks on the residence and all items therein become property of the landlord.

For landlords, this legislation makes the eviction process more efficient. For renters, this legislation allows for sufficient notice to remove their belongings from the property. For the local Sheriff, this legislation frees up valuable law enforcement resources and time.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this letter. If you have any questions, please contact the association office at 410-641-4409.

Sincerely,

Joe Wilson  
President  
Coastal Association of REALTORS®

cc Wicomico County Delegation, Wicomico County Council, Salisbury Area Property Owners Association, Maryland REALTORS®

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