



SEIU MARYLAND & DC STATE COUNCIL

1410 Bush Street, Suite F
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Testimony IN FAVOR of **SB 530**

Housing Opportunities Made Equal Act
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

February 4, 2020, 1:00 PM

Submitted by Terrence Cavanagh, Executive Director

SEIU, Maryland & DC State Council, urges you to pass SB 530.

With over two million members, SEIU is the largest union in North America. We are focused on uniting workers in the sectors health care, public services, and property services to improve lives and the services we provide. Between Maryland and Washington, DC, we represent over 45,000 workers.

Thousands of SEIU families share the same challenges and opportunities as their neighbors. Their incomes provide them with some level of security, but that can be lost through injury, illness, family tragedy or break up, or a sudden down turn in the economy. Many of our members could or have been in a situation where they would qualify for housing vouchers.

Among the good reasons to give an SB 530 a FAVORABLE report are these:

1. **It would give families greater stability.** By requiring landlords to accept housing vouchers, we give families the chance to have greater stability to a time when they are most vulnerable. It can mean children remaining in the same schools, with a support group of teachers, friends and others at a time when they could be most vulnerable.
2. **It would help maintain communities.** Lost of housing is a dramatic experience for individuals and families. That also have a negative effect on the larger community. If families more stability, communities are more stable. That's a win for everyone.
3. **It's fair.** Under SB 530, landlords are not required to accept any and all applicants. If they have a legitimate reason for not accepting an applicant, they are not required to rent an apartment to them. It means they can't say, "NO VOUCHERS NEED APPLY"

We ask you to give a favorable report to SB 530. Thank you.