



**Renters United Maryland
In favor of HB1009
Economic Matter Committee
Tuesday, February 24, 2021**

Good afternoon Chairman Davis and Vice Chair Dumais and committee members. We submit our testimony on behalf of Renters United Maryland (RUM), a statewide coalition for more than 30 nonprofit, civic, religious, labor and legal organizations dedicated to advancing renter protections and rights.

We believe our mission, in a broader sense, supports the belief that the stability and quality of all homes, rented or owned, is critical to the overall health and welfare of our communities. Therefore, we testify in favor of HB1009 and thank Delegate Stewart for his leadership on this bill.

With one of the very highest foreclosure rates in the nation and we expect the rate of foreclosures to increase when the forbearance moratorium expires. This bill will codify the foreclosure moratorium through the end of the state of emergency, require mortgage companies to extend forbearance relief, and provide default repayment options for those who have exhausted forbearance options.

The bill will also prohibit accrual of penalties and interest, and provide for reasonable repayment options after the forbearance. Furthermore, for one year after the end the of state of emergency, HB 1009 prevents mortgage companies from reporting negative credit information related to mortgage payments subject to deferment. Finally, it will create a private right of action for homeowners to take against service providers who violate the law. These protections are necessary to ensure homeowners keep their homes during these unprecedented times.

We cannot allow homeowner to emerge from the housing crisis this pandemic has intensified only to find themselves buried under a mountain of debt and unable to recover. The costs of failing to provide the critical against

foreclosure this bill provides will create far greater human and financial cost to all of us.

We urge a favorable report.

Thank you.

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