

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve
Environment & Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251,
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD, 21401

RE: Opposition to HB785 (Landlord and Tenant- Commencement of Action to Repossess for Failure to Pay Rent- Required Notice and Grace Period).

Dear Chairman Barve:

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 1,100 member firms statewide, appreciates the opportunity to participate in the discussion surrounding HB 785 (Landlord and Tenant – Commencement of Action to Repossess for Failure to Pay Rent – Required Notice and Grace Period). MBIA Opposes the Act in its current version.

This bill would require that landlords provide written notice by first class mail to a tenant if the rent is unpaid prior to the repossession of the property. MBIA respectfully opposes this measure. The measure makes clear that attempts to repossess the property may not begin until 10 days after the receipt of the letter. However, there is no guidance on what constitutes the letter having been received. If, for example, the letter gets lost in the mail or the tenant throws it away without reading it is unclear as to whether or not the proceedings for repossessing the property could begin. The requirement that the letter be sent through the mail rather than simply communicated to the tenant directly is also an additional and unnecessary expense for landlords that only serves to slow the lawful repossession on their property.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure an unfavorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee