



**House Bill 1223 – Landlord and Tenant – Screening of Tenants and Renewal of Tenancy  
- Standards**

**Position: Oppose**

The Maryland REALTORS® opposes HB 1223 which seeks to make several changes to Maryland landlord and tenant law. As a whole, the bill creates a more subjective process for reviewing some rental applications when property managers and landlords typically try to have more objective and neutral policies that apply to renters.

The REALTORS® understand the interest in clarifying how long a tenant's history should be valid before requiring the tenant to purchase another credit report or tenant history but believe that 60 days is too long and that a 30-day period makes more sense. It saves the tenant money when applying for units with the same landlord but ensures that the information is relatively current.

However, the REALTORS® have concern over provisions that do the following:

- The bill establishes alternative process on landlords who deny an applicant based on an insufficient credit or rental history. This could apply to tenants who clearly do not meet the income limitations or other criteria established by the landlord and create additional work/cost in the application process that will ultimately increase costs on tenants.
- Requires landlords to make exceptions to income ratio of 2 to 1 and rent to tenants based on other more subjective evidence about a tenant's ability to rent for a period of one year or more. Having the same income is not same as having the same job and job security.
- Requires the landlord to provide the criteria used to accept tenants and gives tenants specific redress of up to \$1,000 for a landlord who fails to give notice to the tenant with adequate specificity. This could create significantly increase the costs associated with rental applications.

For these reasons, the REALTORS® recommend an unfavorable report.

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