



TESTIMONY FOR HB0785
LANDLORD AND TENANT – COMMENCEMENT OF ACTION TO REPOSSESS FOR
FAILURE TO PAY RENT – REQUIRED NOTICE AND GRACE PERIOD

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Terrasa

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0785 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Repossession and eviction of tenants are exceptionally consequential actions. They affect the tenant's housing status, job status and have financial and other ripples through their life and the lives of their family. There are so many Marylanders who are one major medical bill from bankruptcy. They struggle every month to pay rent and put food on the table for themselves and their families.

While we recognize that landlords need income just as much as tenants in order to feed their families, the process of repossessing should have as much notice to the tenant as possible and give them the best opportunity to resolve the payment problem.

This bill will require the landlord, or their agent, to provide written notice by first-class mail, return receipt requested to the tenant, telling them that the rent is unpaid. Any paperwork that would put in motion the repossession of the dwelling could not be filed before 10 days from the date that the tenant received the notice. This would allow a full ten days that the tenant could make arrangements with the landlord before court filings are started, and legal fees are incurred.

We think that this will allow for a better outcome by giving the tenant an opportunity to make arrangements with the landlord.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.