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PARLIAMENTARIAN

Ways and Means Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 16, 2021

House Bill 574 Montgomery County Stable Homes Act (MC 8–21)

Dear Colleagues,

The **House Bill 574 Montgomery County Stable Homes Act (MC 8–21)** promotes stable housing in Montgomery County for children, families, and residents by requiring a landlord to state a justifiable reason before displacing residents in our community. The Montgomery County Delegation voted overwhelmingly in favor of this bill.

Housing is a basic human need, and the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgency for housing security. As residents wait months for unemployment insurance benefits and face financial and health uncertainty, households that were already cost-burdened before the pandemic face an increased risk of losing their homes as state and federal eviction moratoriums end.

Displacement from a home has a tremendous negative impact on vulnerable residents in our community, and can lead to difficulty finding and maintaining a job, student transiency, and homelessness, among other negative impacts. Our current system creates an imbalance of power when a landlord can remove a tenant from their home with just 60 days notice and no reason provided, causing many residents to avoid reporting unsafe conditions or requesting necessary repairs out of fear of retaliation. During the pandemic, residents are still being forced from their homes when a landlord chooses not to renew their lease, no reason necessary.

I'm proud to reintroduce the Stable Homes Act to protect our residents and vulnerable neighbors from unjust eviction. HB 574 requires landlords to provide a justifiable reason - which includes breach of lease, damage to property, removal from the rental market, or disorderly conduct/illegal activity on the premises - before displacing a tenant.

The Stable Homes Act is a critical step to leveling the imbalance of power between landlords and tenants, ensuring decisions to not renew the lease of a tenant are fair and transparent, and protecting families from destabilizing and unjust displacement well beyond the pandemic.

Stable homes create safe, connected communities, which benefit us all. For these reasons, I urge your favorable vote for **House Bill 574**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jheanelle Wilkins".

Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins