



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Sponsor Testimony in Support of HB 785
Landlord and Tenant – Commencement of Action to Repossess for Failure
to Pay Rent – Required Notice and Grace Period
By Delegate Jen Terrasa in the Environment and Transportation
Committee, February 16, 2021**

Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, members of the Environment and Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present HB 785.

This bill would require that before filing an eviction notice (also known as a Failure to Pay Rent Action) a landlord must first provide the tenant a ten-day notice that the rent is unpaid. There is a sponsor amendment I have offered that would require the landlord to provide additional information in the notice.

Currently, landlords are allowed to begin eviction proceedings as soon as any amount of the rent is late. As many of you know, that eviction begins with the service of a District Court summons to appear in court.

For many tenants, the first notice that the landlord has not received the full rent payment on time, is that court summons. At that point, late fees and court filing fees get added to what they owe.

My bill offers the following solution: if the tenant receives notice before the case is filed that some or all of the rent is past due, the tenant could cure the arrearage before a case is filed.

It is important to keep in mind the large number of Failure to Pay Rent cases that are filed in District Courts. Every year in Maryland, approximately 660,000 cases are filed but only about 6,500 result in the tenant actually being evicted. This bill attempts to reduce the burden on the court system and sheriff's departments across the state by allowing time for landlords and tenants to more easily resolve circumstances when the rent is late.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this bill. I respectfully request that the committee pass a favorable report.