

February 23, 2021

Dear Chairman Smith, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

My name is Tom Kane, and together with my wife, we are owners of 4 rental properties in Maryland. We have owned and rented property at least 15 other rentals in this state since I finished college in 1984. We have had good tenants and bad ones over those years, but through it all, we have provided good and nice housing to these people. We view this portfolio as part of our retirement income & our legacy for our children (who are all still MD based).

The COVID virus has had a significant impact on our business. We have lost 2 tenants to COVID. One had to return home to take care of an ailing parent who contracted COVID (and left without paying rent). The 2<sup>nd</sup> lost their job/internship and left in the middle of the night without notice. That 2<sup>nd</sup> person has the assets to pay us for lost rent and the broken lease (as seen from their application). As of right now, we are out nearly \$9000 in lost rent, yet we still have a mortgage to pay on these homes.

Another tenant is still struggling due to job loss and is 3 months behind in rent. He is a long-term tenant, and we are working with him to make sure that he has a roof over his head. However, we work with him because he makes the effort to work with us. We take care of our tenants.

The proposed fee increases just puts EVEN more burdens on us as small business people. It does nothing to accommodate our needs as hard working, long term, tax paying ACTUAL citizens of this state. Further, the proposed laws to prevent us from recovering the court fees from the tenants is a burden that will just put us under water. The MD legislature needs to start considering the needs of the small business owners as equally as it does all of these other groups.

In closing, please realize that your actions are driving us to completely get rid of the affordable housing we currently provide. The onerous costs of doing business in Baltimore City have caused us to sell most of our City property. If current trends continue (like all of the other veto over rides and new taxes), our next step is to sell all our property and move to Delaware and Florida.

As a lifelong Marylander. Please do not force me to make that decision.

Sincerely,

Thomas J Kane, III