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BILL NO.: **HB 52**

TITLE: Real Property – Alterations in Actions for Repossession and Establishment of Eviction Diversion Program

SPONSOR: Delegate Wells

COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 17, 2021

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 52 – Real Property – Alterations in Actions for Repossession and Establishment of Eviction Diversion Program. This legislation would establish an Eviction Diversion Program in the district court.

Of the many areas in which government could further support its residents, few have been highlighted by the pandemic more than housing. When the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an unprecedented increase in unemployment and poverty, many residents mandated to stay in their homes wondered how long they would be able to afford it. Baltimore County halted eviction actions during this time as a measure to keep all residents safe. These problems preceded the pandemic, however, and without immediate action will continue long after recovery.

Eviction actions, when successful, take away the ability of individuals to rent housing in the future. They serve as a black mark on residents' credit scores and may prevent the procurement of employment, financial assistance, and essential aid for those who are truly in need of these services. By providing for the Eviction Diversion Program, HB 52 allows for continuity of housing and furthers Baltimore County's fight against this cycle of poverty. Failure to afford essential housing should not devastate the lives of our residents.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 52. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Director of Government Affairs, at cconner@baltimorecountymd.gov.