



## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1312

### COVID-19 Eviction and Housing Relief Act of 2021

*House Judiciary Committee*

**February 17, 2021**

*Submitted by Stacey Jefferson and Julia Gross, Co-Chairs*

### **Member Agencies:**

Advocates for Children and Youth  
Baltimore Jewish Council  
Behavioral Health System Baltimore  
CASH Campaign of Maryland  
Catholic Charities  
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland  
Family League of Baltimore  
Fuel Fund of Maryland  
Health Care for the Homeless  
Homeless Persons  
Representation Project  
Job Opportunities Task Force  
League of Women Voters of Maryland  
Loyola University Maryland  
Maryland Catholic Conference  
Maryland Center on Economic Policy  
Maryland Community Action  
Partnership  
Maryland Family Network  
Maryland Hunger Solutions  
Paul's Place  
Public Justice Center  
St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore  
Welfare Advocates

### **Marylanders Against Poverty**

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**Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) strongly supports HB 1312**, which will significantly extend and expand eviction protections beyond those offered by current orders.

**The COVID-19 pandemic has put hundreds of thousands of Maryland households on the brink of eviction.** The pandemic also highlighted the inequities that exist in our state and has exacerbated existing disparities in rental debt. 36% of Black households aren't current on their rent, compared to 14% of white households 30% of households earning less than \$50,000 are behind, compared to just 10% of those earning \$75,000 or more.

The bill provides, among other things

- Expansion and extension of the Governor Hogan/ CDC eviction orders throughout 2021;
- Financial relief for landlords through a statewide program that matches state/county funds;
- Prohibitions on lease non-renewals without a good cause. Rent delinquency and lease expiration are not good causes for lease termination; and
- Prohibition late fees, interest charges, and rent increases throughout the emergency.

**We know Maryland can't recover from this pandemic if the General Assembly does not take swift action to ensure eviction prevention, to prioritize stability over displacement, and to end the disproportionate impact of eviction on Black and Brown communities.** MAP appreciates your consideration and urges the committee to issue a favorable report for HB 1312.

*HB 1312 is part of a larger package of Housing Justice bills necessary to support safe, healthy, fair, and affordable housing in Maryland. Marylanders Against Poverty proudly supports this package. For more information visit [www.rentersunitedmaryland.org](http://www.rentersunitedmaryland.org).*

**Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near poverty, and to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty.**