

RE: HB 729 and SB 530

I am a housing provider with rental properties in Maryland and someone who is involved in providing safe, affordable housing. This letter is to express my concerns with the proposed legislation known as HB 729 and SB 530

These bills and similar legislation under consideration purport to help tenants, but actually do more harm than good.

As more restrictions are placed on property owners, housing providers will take the necessary steps to protect their assets and minimize the risks of offering rental property to Maryland residents.

Making it harder for a housing provider to evict renters for non-payment or other breach-of-lease issues, will cause owners to adjust for the additional risk to their property. They may increase rents and security deposits and/or tighten the standards for allowing a person to rent a property.

In the end, this only harms those who are most in need of affordable housing.

In light of the current pandemic and moratoria on evictions, this bill only adds to the difficulties of “mom and pop” housing providers. They are already faced with the problem of non-paying residents yet are still responsible for mortgages, taxes, insurance and maintenance for their properties.

As the risk of owning rental properties increases, small, private owners may be make the rational decision to sell their holdings and this could result in renters having their choices limited to renting from large, faceless, corporate entities or government-owned housing. Neither of these choices is in the best interest of those who, by choice or necessity, wish to rent instead of buying a place to live.

I hope that you and your colleagues will take into account the real-world effects of this legislation and vote it down.

Thank you for your consideration