



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE ASIAN AMERICAN
AND PACIFIC ISLANDER CAUCUS
MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

DELEGATE KRISSELDA VALDERRAMA
CHAIR

SENATOR CLARENCE K. LAM, M.D., M.P.H.
FIRST VICE CHAIR

DELEGATE MARK S. CHANG
SECOND VICE CHAIR

DELEGATE HARRY BHANDARI
OUTREACH COMMITTEE CHAIR,
SECRETARY

DELEGATE WANIKA FISHER, ESQ.
DELEGATE DAVID MOON
LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY COMMITTEE
CO-CHAIRS

DELEGATE LILY QI
TREASURER

SENATOR SUSAN C. LEE
DELEGATE KUMAR P. BARVE

To: Delegate Luke Clippinger, Chair
Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Vice Chair
Judiciary Committee Members

FROM: Maryland Legislative Asian-American and Pacific-Islander (AAPI) Caucus

DATE: February 10, 2021

RE: HB719 Commercial Tenants - Personal Liability Clauses - Enforceability

POSITION: SUPPORT

Dear Chair Clippinger,

The Maryland Legislative Asian-American and Pacific-Islander Caucus is made up of Senators and Delegates in the General Assembly who seek to represent the interests of the Asian-American and Pacific-Islander (AAPI) communities in Maryland. As the fastest-growing racial minority group in the US, it is crucial that the legislative goals of AAPI folks are well-represented in Maryland public policy. Thank you for allowing the Caucus the opportunity to express our support of HB719 in the spirit of AAPIs across the state.

HB719 is an emergency bill that would temporarily prohibit the enforcement of personal liability clauses in a commercial leases. The bill applies to businesses impacted from the beginning of lockdown to September 2020, and aims to help individuals whose businesses have been impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

[Asian-Americans own over 1.9 million businesses](#) in the US. Out of the [400,000 AAPIs](#) living in Maryland, a significant population own small businesses, many of which have been especially vulnerable in the wake of COVID-19. Between mass layoffs and periodic closures, it is no secret that business-owners are financially fragile right now. On top of the struggles of maintaining their business at this time, the individual business owner should not hold the extra burden of losing their home or car because of a clause within their business's lease.

Our small businesses are the heart of our communities. HB719 must be passed now to protect our local business-owners who have already suffered a great deal from the pandemic.

The Maryland Legislative AAPI Caucus supports this bill and urges a favorable report on HB719.