

February 17, 2021

The Honorable Luke H. Clippinger
House Judiciary Committee
House Office Building, Room 101
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 52 Real Property – Alterations in Actions for Repossession and Establishment of Eviction Diversion Program

Dear Chairman Clippinger:

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 1,100 member firms statewide, appreciates the opportunity to participate in the discussion surrounding HB 52 Real Property – Alterations in Actions for Repossession and Establishment of Eviction Diversion Program. MBIA **Opposes** the Act in its current version.

MBIA respectfully opposes this measure. The requirement that tenant and landlord evictions must be delayed pending a trial at the request of a party creates an additional expense for both landlords and tenants. Landlords must take account of the cost of higher potential cost of evictions and this will drive rent prices up as landlords hedge against legal costs. Housing prices in Maryland are currently so high that many people are getting priced out of the market and this measure will exacerbate that problem.

Additionally, the requirement that these cases be brought to court within 15 days represents a significant overburdening of the court system especially during a period in which landlord and tenant issues are expected to rise due to the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. This represents an extremely short time period for fact finding and review while simultaneously not allowing sufficient time for the court system to properly process these cases.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure an unfavorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: House Judiciary Committees