



Eviction diversion/defense – HB 52 SB 454

My name is Detrese Dowridge and I currently serve as President for Right to Housing Alliance and I also serve as a Steering Committee member for BRU (Baltimore Renters United). I'm writing in support of the Eviction diversion/defense bill. As we all are aware, there are already tenants who are struggling, and with the COVID not showing any signs of slowing down anytime soon we are in desperate need for a resolution to keep people in their homes. There are tenants who aren't able to pay their rent on time due to the timing of their paychecks and other financial benefits they receive. In some cases, the payments are made before the Failure to Pay rent trial date. There is no harm in the Landlord and Tenant coming together to work out a Good-faith effort to use rental assistance and/or payment plan. This would cut back the amount of unnecessary Failure to Pay rent filings.

Ever since I become an advocate for Housing Justice in 2014 my main motto has always been put yourself in other people's shoes. I'm asking you to imagine if you are in a situation where you are unable to pay your rent on time especially if the cause of the situation is no fault of your own, imagine if you had to wait for funds that is received later in the month to pay rent, imagine if you lost your job or is unable to work due to COVID. I ask that you please vote in favor of this bill so that tenants are given a fair shake in an already broken rent court system. I honestly feel the grace period should 30 days but the 10 day grace period is a start.

Thank You
Detrese Dowridge
President/Leadership Council Member
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