



**MARYLAND
LEGAL AID**

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**STATEWIDE
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February 18, 2022

The Honorable Delegate Kumar P. Barve
Chairman, House Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Landlord and Tenant – Right to Redemption of Leased Premises – Form of Payment

Dear Chairperson Barve and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 932, legislation that will expand the form of payment landlords and mobile home park operators have to accept when offered by the tenant. Maryland Legal Aid (MLA) is a non-profit law firm that provides free legal services to the State's low-income and vulnerable residents. MLA's 12 offices serve residents in each of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions. MLA handles various civil legal matters, including family law, housing, public benefits, consumer law (e.g., bankruptcy and debt collection), and criminal record expungements to remove barriers to obtaining child custody, housing, a driver's license, and employment. This letter serves as notice that Andrew Rabinowitz, Esq. will testify on behalf of MLA at the request of Delegate Vaughn Stewart.

The harm this bill seeks to address is familiar to many MLA clients. These clients are facing eviction because of a judgment against them in a Failure to Pay rent action, and are in a financial crisis because they don't have the income to pay the rent in full. The clients in need reached out to a government or government-related entity to help them and their families stay in their homes, thus escaping the terror of homelessness. The Landlord, for reasons never explained, rejects the payment from that government entity, thus, exposing the client to homelessness unless MLA advocate for the court to intervene. Among all the harms that MLA clients are exposed to, this harm is inexplicable. This bill will ameliorate this harm and protect Marylanders from homelessness.

Thank you for considering this written testimony. MLA asks the committee for a favorable report on HB 932.

Sincerely,

/s/ Andrew Rabinowitz

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