



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

www.womensdemocraticclub.org

House Bill 0674

**Landlord and Tenant - Stay of Eviction Proceeding for Rental Assistance Determination
Environment and Transportation Committee – February 22, 2022
SUPPORT**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2022 legislative session.

WDC is one of the largest and most active Democratic Clubs in our County with hundreds of politically active women and men, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of HB0674 - Landlord and Tenant - Stay of Eviction Proceeding for Rental Assistance Determination. This bill requires a judge to stay an eviction proceeding when the tenant has applied for rental assistance. If a judge has already entered a judgment in favor of the landlord during an eviction hearing, the bill requires the judge to stay the eviction order or whatever other order would be used to evict the tenant. This legislation provides greater relief to already stressed and cash-poor tenants; circumstances that disproportionately impact families, women, and minorities.

Severe racial and gender disparity in evictions exists in the State of Maryland. This is substantiated by *The Eviction Study*¹ a 2020 Baltimore study, which showed that approximately fifty percent more female-headed households were removed from their homes than male-headed households. Further, it showed that the number of Black residents evicted was three times higher than those of White residents evicted.

The COVID-19 pandemic also compounds the impact of evictions on health disparities. Black and Hispanic people have died of COVID-19 at higher rates than their White counterparts, and these same groups have experienced significantly more rent-related financial stress and continue to face disproportionately high eviction rates during the pandemic.

This bill provides relief to tenants who are already struggling financially and who face eviction, which leads to catastrophic consequences including potential loss of benefits, future housing insecurity, and adverse health effects.

We ask for your support for HB0674 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.

Respectfully,

Leslie Milano
President

¹ Tim Thomas, Ian Kennedy, Alex Ramiller, Ott Toomet, & Jose Hernandez
May 8th, 2020