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BILL NO.: **SB 384**

TITLE: Landlord and Tenant - Stay of Eviction Proceeding for Rental Assistance Determination

SPONSOR: Senator Hettleman

COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: March 29, 2022

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 384 – Landlord and Tenant - Stay of Eviction Proceeding for Rental Assistance Determination. This bill would require a court to issue a stay of eviction if the tenant is engaged in a good faith application for rental assistance.

At the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, County Executive Olszewski acted quickly in the face of rising rates of unemployment and growing economic insecurity to keep Baltimore County residents in their homes. The County created its first Department of Housing and Community Development, bringing its housing resources together to ensure a concerted and coordinated effort to prevent evictions throughout the pandemic and in years to come. With assistance from the State and Federal governments, and through innovative partnerships such as the STEP Program with United Way, the County has prevented thousands of resident evictions to date.

SB 384 would require a court that has not entered judgement to stay an eviction proceeding, or a warrant if judgement has been entered, if the tenant in question presents compelling evidence that they are engaged in a good faith application for rental assistance. This legislation would ensure that County residents taking active efforts to use the myriad resources available to them are not displaced from their homes in the eviction process. As the pandemic continues to keep residents in their homes, it is critical that eviction prevention resources are available at every step of the eviction process.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 384. For more information, please contact Joel Beller, Acting Director of Government Affairs at jbeller@baltimorecountymd.gov.