

MARYLAND JUDICIAL CONFERENCE
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Hon. Joseph M. Getty
Chief Judge

187 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
FROM: Legislative Committee
Suzanne D. Pelz, Esq.
410-260-1523
RE: Senate Bill 816
Real Property – Actions for Possession – Pet Protections
DATE: February 23, 2022
(3/2)
POSITION: Oppose, as drafted

The Maryland Judiciary opposes Senate Bill 816, as drafted. Senate Bill 816 requires the Department of Agriculture to develop, publish and regularly update a fact sheet on the care and protection of pets in the event of an eviction or other loss of possession of real property. The summons required to be provided under Real Property § 14–132 to a person holding possession of real property shall include a copy of the fact sheet.

The Judiciary has no position on the policy aims of this legislation but is concerned with the provision that requires a summons include a copy of the fact sheet noted above. A summons primary purpose is to provide notice to an individual that they must appear in court. Adding too much additional information to the summons may result in this notice provision getting lost as the individual may not see this notice with all the other documentation they must now read. This will have the unintended consequence of the individual not appearing in court. This fact sheet has not yet been created so it is not clear how many pages the fact sheet will even require.

This bill would also create additional burdens on clerks' offices by requiring more documentation be included with summonses.

cc. Hon. Susan Lee
Judicial Council
Legislative Committee
Kelley O'Connor