MARYLAND COMMUNITY
**ACTION**
P A R T N E R S H I P
A NETWORK OF COMMUNITY ACTION
AGENCIES SERVING MD, DC & DE

2/7/2022

**Re: Support of SB 279 – Access to Counsel in Evictions Special Fund – Alteration**

Dear Honorable Chair Smith and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland Community Action Partnership (MCAP) to urge your support of SB 279: Access to Counsel in Evictions Special Fund - Alteration.

The Maryland Community Action Partnership (MCAP) is a statewide non-profit organization comprised of Maryland's 17 Community Action Agencies, which collectively serve every Maryland county. Together, we work toward eradicating homelessness and poverty to realize our vision of ensuring that all Maryland individuals and families are stable, economically secure, and live in safe and thriving communities.

MCAP supports SB 279 because of its impact on those we serve, individuals and families with low-incomes.

**If passed, the bill would:**

- Provide funding for the Access to Counsel in Evictions Program administered by the MLSC to fully implement access to legal representation in evictions and other related proceedings in the State of Maryland.

- Alter the contents of the Access to Counsel in Evictions Special Fund to include money received by the Division of Consumer Protection in the Office of the Attorney General from a settlement, an agreement, or a judgment relating to a certain investigation or enforcement of the Maryland Consumer Protection Act.

The provision of funding for legal counsel to represent tenants with low-income in Maryland will help to deter wrongful evictions, ensure equity in housing, and ultimately decrease rates of homelessness. Providing funding and supports to enable individuals and families to access services and remain housed is an important tool in the fight to ensure economic stability and safety for all Marylanders.

If there is any additional information that I can provide for you as you consider this bill, I would be happy to help. You can contact me at amartin@maryland-cap.org, or by calling 205-757-0764.

Sincerely,

Angela Martin, Executive Director