



Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition

**Testimony to the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
SB 629: Landlord and Tenant - Eviction Data - Collection and Distribution  
Position: Favorable**

February 22, 2022

Senator Smith, Chair  
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
Cc: Members, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Honorable Chair Smith and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition (MCRC) is a statewide coalition of individuals and organizations that advances economic rights and financial inclusion for Maryland consumers through research, education, direct service, and advocacy. Our 8,500 supporters include consumer advocates, practitioners, and low-income and working families throughout Maryland.

We are writing today in support of SB 629.

This bill requires the Judiciary to collect data for possession of residential property and share eviction data with the Department of Housing and Community Development every 2 weeks. The bill further requires the Department to make eviction data available in a certain format to a state agency or an academic institution located in the state.

Maryland does not have a standard place where statewide eviction data is collected and analyzed. Currently, the Maryland Judiciary only publishes county level eviction filings and outcomes a month after they happen. Data are critical for analysis to target community and state interventions as well as for an efficient civil legal system.

Because there is no state mandate or framework for stewarding eviction data, jurisdictions vary in types of data they collect and make available. As a result, it is difficult to make cross-jurisdictional comparisons or to compare data from the county level to the state level. Further, Maryland is not included in any state comparative analysis, including Eviction Lab which was the first national database created to help neighbors and policymakers understand the eviction.

The Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition provides a number of direct services throughout the state geared towards generating economic equity and housing stability. MCRC's Tenant Advocacy Program



Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition

empowers tenants to advocate for themselves by providing information about housing rights and responsibilities, legal information, mediation, and referrals to other nonprofits and legal services. Our SOAR (Securing Older Adult Resources) Program works to improve the financial well-being of older adults through research, community outreach programs, and direct service benefits including financial coaching and counseling. Many of our tenant and SOAR clients are faced with barriers to housing stability and often come to us when they are faced with eviction. Access to data would better inform our eviction prevention and family stability efforts.

For these reasons, MCRC supports SB 629 and asks for a favorable report.

Respectfully,

Isadora Stern  
Policy Associate