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MAJORITY WHIP

Judicial Proceedings Committee

Joint Committee on
Cybersecurity, Information Technology,
and Biotechnology

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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 22, 2022

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

SB 564 – Favorable – Landlord and Tenant and Wrongful Detainer Actions –
Eviction Prevention Services

Senate Bill 564 aims to connect tenants with counsel at the time of the hearing if they failed to connect before. Allowing the time to speak to an attorney builds trust in the system of justice itself. The brief pause to connect with counsel will significantly improve the effectiveness of services as well as the efficiency of the model itself as many people may procrastinate or fret when they are facing a crisis. Foreclosures, evictions and defaults are lagging indicators of the economic chaos brought on from COVID 19. There are over 100,000 Maryland households that are behind on rent, and the federal funds are running out. This is a minor pause to provide services to those who need them most, for a fundamental need, housing.

Marylanders deserve security in their homes to foster stable atmospheres to raise children. We should engage with all reasonable actions to avoid separating a person, and especially families from their homes. For Marylanders to fully avail themselves to federal rental assistance, they need time to gather their documents and process the applications. The access to these resources should be allowed when we are at the crucial juncture when a person is perhaps made homeless.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on SB 564.