

February 22, 2022

Testimony on Senate Bill 629
Landlord and Tenant - Eviction Data - Collection and Distribution
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Position: Favorable

Maryland Nonprofits is a statewide association of more than 1300 nonprofit organizations and institutions. In view of the eviction crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the importance of reliable information to direct relief funding and services, we urge you to support Senate Bill 629.

Maryland does not have one 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. However, because there is no state mandate or framework to standardize the data collected and reported, 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. This frustrates efforts to analyze and fairly or efficiently target funding or interventions. 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.

Data are critical for analysis to target community and state interventions as well as for an efficient civil legal system.

The eviction crisis may easily outlast the funds now available – it is critical to use these resources as fairly and efficiently as possible.

We urge you to give Senate Bill 629 a favorable report.