



## **HOMELESS PERSONS REPRESENTATION PROJECT, INC.**

### **HB0824 – Landlord and Tenant - Eviction Data - Collection and Distribution**

**Hearing before the Judiciary Committee**

**February 16, 2022**

**Position: SUPPORT**

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The Homeless Persons Representation Project, Inc. (HPRP) is a non-profit civil legal aid organization that provides free legal representation to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness on legal issues that will lead to an end to homelessness. HPRP regularly represents tenants in failure to pay rent cases and other landlord-tenant matters in Baltimore City.

**HB 824** – 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 to a State agency or an academic institution located in the State.

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. 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.

HPRP represents tenants in landlord-tenant matters in Baltimore City, Prince George's, and Montgomery counties.

- Data would inform our eviction prevention and family stability efforts.
- Eviction data would help our community school efforts.
- Data would help our efforts to address widespread housing instability among students.
- Data would help us target rental assistance.

- Data would inform our community conservation and preservation efforts by identifying areas in Baltimore, Prince George's, and Montgomery Counties with high eviction rates.

We ask that the committee issue a favorable report on HB 824.