



House Bill 703 – Real Property – Actions to Repossess – Judgment for Tenants and Proof of Rental Licensure

Position: Oppose

Maryland REALTORS® opposes HB 703 which would prohibit a landlord from offering a provisional or temporary rental license to show compliance with a property rental license law.

The REALTORS® do not oppose a requirement to show a property is properly registered when filing court actions, but we believe the law should permit a landlord to present a temporary or provisional license if a county registration program has not provided the current license yet.

Under some county registration programs, a landlord will initially receive a “temporary” license while the “current” license is processed and an inspection is conducted. This would even apply in some cases when a property has had a license for many years but is simply renewing the license and is given a “temporary” license until the inspection is completed.

Certainly, the judge should have discretion to determine whether the landlord had a temporary or current license before renting to the tenant, but a landlord should not lose a legal right simply because a county is slow in processing a rental license. In addition, due to the COVID-19 emergency orders, including the most recent, some county inspectors were not allowed to go into a property to conduct an inspection.

For these reasons, the REALTORS® recommend an unfavorable report.

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