

Dear Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

This testimony is being submitted by Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore, a group of individuals working to move white folks as part of a multi-racial movement for equity and racial justice in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Howard County. We are also working in collaboration with CASA de Maryland and Renters United. I am a resident of District 46 and **I am testifying in support of House Bill HB0684.**



Received wisdom says that landlords want to hold on to good tenants, and that if you pay your rent on time and follow the rules, you can stay in an apartment you like and can afford long term. My experience renting for 13 years in Baltimore City proved this to be untrue. Rental housing suffers frequent turnover in ownership, and new owners inevitably want to raise rents; frequently this is accomplished by terminating the leases of all existing tenants at their next renewal date, so the apartments can be re-listed at vastly increased rents. In my time renting, this led to me being “priced out” of apartment buildings and entire neighborhoods over and over again.

I escaped this vicious cycle by buying a house; many people aren’t lucky enough to have the resources and support to do so. Having to move every couple years is expensive, stressful, and disruptive- particularly to children, who are prone to suffer poor school performance, increased drop-out rates, and negative health outcomes as a consequence of being evicted from their homes and forced to move.

HB 0684 allows local jurisdictions to require a just basis for landlords to either refuse to renew or to cut off month-to-month/week-to-week leases. This legislation would enable local legislatures to pass their own laws, if they choose, limiting how and when lease non-renewals occur, requiring landlords to have a just cause to non-renew, or requiring landlords to prove a just cause in court. We are in an eviction crisis, and allowing jurisdictions like Montgomery County and Baltimore City to establish these policies could be a cost-effective method of addressing the problem..

It is for these reasons that I am encouraging you to vote **in support of HB0684.**

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,
Lindsay Keipper
2425 Fleet St.

Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore