

SHANEKA HENSON
Legislative District 30A
Anne Arundel County

Appropriations Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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Chair Kumar P. Barve
Vice Chair Dana Stein
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

It is widely recognized that housing instability can have a significant negative impact on a person's physical and mental wellbeing. Housing instability comes in many forms including moving frequently, overcrowding, spending the majority of income on housing, or living in substandard or poorly maintained homes. Average renters in Maryland spend over 25% of their income on rent and make up 33% of households. Of these renters, 25% are living at or below the poverty line, and many of these residents are spending over half their income on rent.

An involuntary change in circumstance, such as death of the primary wage earner or relocation of a job, can make it impossible for families to continue payments on rental housing. Yet, many leases have heavy termination penalties and families with limited savings can be locked into leases unable to make the necessary adjustments to adapt to their income changes. HB1016 limits the liability of tenants by allowing lease termination in certain instances and creates some relief when tenants are navigating life and income challenges.

I believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to live well, and this bill helps to remove hurdles that can keep renters from making healthy life transitions. Thank you for your consideration and I urge a favorable report on HB1016.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shaneka Henson".

Delegate Shaneka Henson