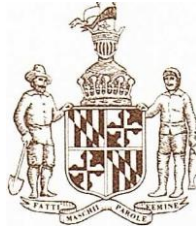


**TERRI L. HILL, M.D.**  
Legislative District 12A  
Howard County

Health and Government  
Operations Committee

*Subcommittees*  
Government Operations and  
Health Facilities

Public Health and Minority  
Health Disparities



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## THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

January 26, 2023

### SUPPORT

#### HB0034 - Failure to Pay Rent Proceedings – Prohibition on Rent Increases and Sealing of Court Records

Dear Chairs Barve and Clippinger, Vice-chairs Stein and Moon, and Members of the Joint Committees,

I am here to ask for your support for HB0034 which

- prohibits a landlord from increasing a tenant's rent because a judgment was entered against the tenant in a failure to pay rent action, and
- allows for the sealing of certain eviction filing records in instances where a judgement for eviction was never made because, for instance, the debt was resolved before the hearing or the eviction filing was otherwise settled or dismissed or settled. This would help ensure that the filing of a failure-to-pay action does not carry the same long-term, potentially detrimental effects of an actual finding of a failure-to-pay or eviction itself.

An earlier version of this was passed in 2021 but did not pass the Senate.

This is a long-standing issue that, like many other injustices, was magnified during the pandemic. While many failure-to-pay filings for eviction are legitimate, others are not. Even when payments are made, debts settled and cases dismissed, these eviction proceedings remain on the tenant's record. Having an eviction proceeding on one's record can have unintended consequences that can affect the tenant's future housing options, job opportunities, and financing abilities. In September of 2022, 12,456 failure to pay rent proceedings were dismissed in court. In some cases, filings are used to antagonize tenants for late payments and not for non-payment.

HB0034 would allow the District Court to seal the court records of eviction proceedings that were settled or where cases are dismissed. Tenants can motion to seal the record one year after the proceeding has occurred and the District Court shall seal the record 30 days after granting the tenant's motion to seal.

I ask for a favorable report on HB0034 with amendment offered, which reflects several clarifying changes requested by the Maryland Multi-Housing Association, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terri Hill".