



**Testimony SB 420  
Finance Committee  
February 23, 2023  
Position: FAVORABLE**

Dear Chairperson Griffith and Members of the Finance Committee:

The Community Development Network of Maryland (CDN) is the voice for Maryland's community development sector and serves nearly 200 member organizations. CDN—focuses on small affordable housing developers, housing counseling agencies and community-based non-profits across the state of Maryland. The mission of CDN is to promote, strengthen and advocate for the community development sector throughout Maryland's urban, suburban and rural communities.

SB 420- Provides a housing allowance to households that are receiving temporary cash assistance or transitional support services and are not receiving a certain housing subsidy where the tenant's portion of rent is based on a percentage of the tenant's income; and requiring the continuation of a housing allowance for 6 months following the termination of temporary cash assistance if the household is receiving or is eligible to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.

In Maryland, households with children, older adults and people with disabilities are most at risk for eviction. Rental assistance not only enables families to meet their housing needs but it leaves them with more resources to meet other basic needs. Evictions create significant costs for state and local governments including costs associated with shelters, education, transportation for homeless youth, foster care, and health care provided in hospitals rather than community-based care.

Many believe that eviction is a high poverty urban problem but it is clear that suburban renters face many of the same challenges as their city counterparts, including eviction. Over the past decade, research shows that evictions reinforce poverty and limit housing opportunities for Maryland's most fragile citizens. The stain of an eviction sets Marylanders on a path of housing insecurity that limits educational and economic opportunities, and increases health problems for them and their families.

A housing allowance could be a lifeline for households throughout the state of Maryland.

We ask that the committee issue a favorable report on SB 420.

Submitted by Claudia Wilson Randall, Executive Director, Community Development Network