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TESTIMONY ON SB#/0162- POSITION: FAVORABLE

Landlord and Tenant - Termination of Residential Lease - Limitation of Liability for Rent

TO: Chair Smith, Jr., Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

OPENING: My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0162, Landlord and Tenant - Termination of Residential Lease - Limitation of Liability for Rent

Post pandemic the incidence of disability and depression has been documented as increasing over the pre-pandemic numbers of persons facing these problems. When a person is diagnosed by a professional qualified to make a diagnosis of intellectual or developmental disorder or a mental disorder that individual is likely unable to process their responsibilities as a renter to remit that rent to their landlord.

The landlord should not be permitted to pursue any individual struggling to recover their full mental capacity to the best of their ability beyond a set period of time. There are Jewish texts that state "...texts specifically define housing as one of the obligatory types of tzedakah. The Bible commands that a poor person be granted "sufficient for what lacks, according to what is lacking to him." One talmudic text understands each phrase in that command as referring to a specific type of assistance one might grant a poor person: "'Sufficient for what he lacks'—this is a house. 'What is lacking'—this is a bed and table." Significantly, this text imagines the primary needs of a poor person as being related to housing."

Tenants, Jewish law suggests, are a class in need of protection, and whose safety and security depends on the landlords.

Thus, in concert with my Jewish faith and values I believe this bill to enforce a moral duty upon landlords in how they treat persons who most need to be protected due to their mental condition. **I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#/0162**