



NAACP

Maryland
STATE CONFERENCE

March 19, 2024

Judicial Proceedings
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, Maryland

Re: SB 162 - Landlord and Tenant - Termination of Residential Lease –
Limitation of Liability for Rent

Members of the Committee,

I write to you today on behalf of the Maryland NAACP in strong support of Senate Bill 162, which aims to limit a tenant's liability for rent under a residential lease to not more than 2 months' rent in specific circumstances. This legislation is crucial in addressing the intersectionality of housing insecurity and mental health, an issue deeply aligned with the mission and values of the NAACP.

At the heart of the NAACP's mission lies the pursuit of equality and justice for all individuals, particularly those from historically marginalized communities. Housing justice is an essential component of this mission, as safe and stable housing is a fundamental human right. However, for individuals facing mental health challenges, this right is often jeopardized.

Senate Bill 162 recognizes the unique struggles faced by tenants with mental disorders, whose ability to maintain a stable living situation may be hindered by their condition. By limiting a tenant's liability for rent in situations where a mental disorder necessitates a higher level of care than can be provided at the leased premises, this legislation seeks to protect vulnerable individuals from undue financial burden and homelessness.

The mission of the NAACP of Maryland is clear. We cannot achieve true equality and justice if individuals with mental health challenges are disproportionately burdened by housing insecurity and discrimination. Senate Bill 162 aligns with our commitment to dismantling systemic barriers that perpetuate inequality and ensuring that all individuals have access to the resources and support they need to thrive.

Furthermore, this legislation aligns with the NAACP's broader efforts to advance social and economic justice. Housing instability and homelessness not only exacerbate mental health issues but also perpetuate cycles of poverty and disenfranchisement. By providing protection for tenants with mental disorders, Senate Bill 162 contributes to creating a more equitable

society where all individuals, regardless of their mental health status, have the opportunity to live with dignity and security.

In conclusion, I urge you to support Senate Bill 162 as a critical step towards promoting housing justice and mental health equity in Maryland. By passing this legislation, we affirm our commitment to upholding the values of equality, justice, and dignity for all residents of our state.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

In Service,

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