



HB 1114 - Real Property - Landlord and Tenant - Procedures for Failure to Pay Rent, Breach of Lease, and Tenant Holding Over

Environment and Transportation Committee

February 27, 2024

SUPPORT

Chair Korman, Vice-Chair Boyce and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 1114. This bill will ensure that tenants have notice of their impending eviction date and a limited period of time to reclaim their personal possessions in case an eviction is executed.

The CASH Campaign of Maryland promotes economic advancement for low-to-moderate income individuals and families in Baltimore and across Maryland. CASH accomplishes its mission through operating a portfolio of direct service programs, building organizational and field capacity, and leading policy and advocacy initiatives to strengthen family economic stability. CASH and its partners across the state achieve this by providing free tax preparation services through the IRS program 'VITA', offering free financial education and coaching, and engaging in policy research and advocacy. **Almost 4,000 of CASH's tax preparation clients earn less than \$10,000 annually. More than half earn less than \$20,000.**

Renters need and deserve reliable notice of the eviction date so that they can exercise their statutory right of redemption ("pay to stay") or make plans to leave the property with their belongings intact. Equally, Maryland renters (like most renters in the country) deserve a reclamation period after the eviction occurs, to mitigate the financial and personal loss that evictions cause. A "reclamation period" is a period post-eviction in which a renter can still gain access to their possessions such as life-saving medicine, electronics, and personal treasures such as photos, mementos, and heirlooms.

HB1114 would 1) provide tenants notice 14 days in advance of their impending eviction dates; and 2) provide tenants the opportunity to reclaim whatever personal possessions are on the property for ten (10) days after the eviction occurs. This is a sensible bill that brings Maryland in line with the rest of the country on executing evictions.

Washington D.C., New Jersey, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Virginia all require that the tenant be given notice of their eviction date and the opportunity to reclaim their personal possessions after their eviction. Moreover, nineteen states and D.C. require the tenant be given notice of their eviction date, the opportunity to reclaim their personal possessions, and require the landlord to perform some duty to store the tenant's possessions during the time of holding. An additional nine states require the tenant be given notice of their eviction date and the opportunity to reclaim their possessions.

HB 1114 is also beneficial to neighborhoods in that it no longer allows for an evicted tenant's belonging to be thrown out on public streets. Currently, in most of Maryland, a tenant's personal belongings are thrown into the street after an eviction, creating clutter that blocks sidewalks and creates public blight. HB 1114 remedies this issue by requiring the landlord to discard of whatever remaining items that are left in a proper and clean fashion.

Additionally, many jurisdictions currently require landlords to have a specific number of workers, equipment, and resources at the ready to conduct an eviction. Not only is this costly to the landlord, but in the event an eviction is redeemed, cancelled, or postponed, the landlord loses money and resources. Instituting a reclamation period after an executed eviction means that landlords will no longer have to hire 5-6 workers to

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be present at each eviction. The landlord will now have more flexibility after the end of the 10-day period to dispose of any remaining belongings – without placing those belongings in the public way.

The CASH Campaign of Maryland is a member of the Renters United Maryland coalition and asks that the Committee issue a report of FAVORABLE on HB 1114.

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