

February 27, 2024

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

**Position: FAVORABLE**

**TO:** Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the Environment & Transportation Committee

**FROM:** Miriam Grant

**I own a duplex in the Reservoir Hill neighborhood of Baltimore City (District 40) and as a landlord, I believe HB 1114 is essential to ensure fairness for renters and our neighborhoods.** Tenants should have notice of their impending eviction date and a reasonable period of time to reclaim their personal belongings when an eviction is carried out. If HB 1114 is passed, it would provide both, resulting in greater stability for families and individuals, and a reduction in community blight.

While eviction is deeply unfortunate, and something I would like to avoid, it is a reality of the rental housing system. I want my tenants to be put in the best possible position should an eviction become necessary. They should have ample notice of when the eviction is scheduled for, so they have time to either collect the funds to “pay and stay,” or secure alternate housing and move their belongings. Should they be unable to move ahead of an eviction, they should be able to reclaim their possessions in order to minimize the negative impacts. Losing housing shouldn’t also mean losing life-saving medications, personal identification, family photos and heirlooms, or their toddler’s favorite stuffy.

HB 1114 would also be beneficial for neighborhoods in that it would prohibit an evicted tenant’s belongings from being thrown out in the street. Currently, in most of Maryland, a tenant’s personal belongings are tossed into the street after an eviction, creating clutter that blocks sidewalks and creates public blight. HB 1114 would remedy this issue by requiring landlords to discard whatever remaining items are left after an eviction in a clean and responsible 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, canceled, 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 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.

This is sensible legislation that brings Maryland in line with the rest of the country in how they execute 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.

For these reasons, **I respectfully urge a favorable report on HB 1114.**