

HB693_SusanAllen_FAV

February 20, 2024

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TESTIMONY ON HB693 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Renters' Rights and Stabilization Act of 2024

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

FROM: Susan Allen

My name is Susan Allen. I am a resident of District 30. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB693 Renters' Rights and Stabilization Act of 2024.

I am a member of the Maryland Poor People's Campaign. My support of basic human rights for all Maryland residents is also deeply supported by my congregation at St. Anne's Episcopal Church and my work with Anne Arundel Connecting Together.

I feel intense shame that Maryland—a state I love—is the eviction capital of the United States.

HB693 can immediately lower evictions by increasing the shockingly low surcharge a landlord pays to take renters to court.

I have personally heard testimony in MGA committees that agents for landlords immediately file eviction proceedings for \$15 or less WHEN A TENANT IS ONE DAY LATE ON PAYING RENT. Low wealth and working families cannot afford to go to Renters Court.

My husband and I are terrified to rent in Maryland because of the lack of basic protections for tenants. Our financial helpers have suggested we rent while we find housing we can age in.

WE SAID NO, WE CANNOT RISK RENTING IN MARYLAND. EVEN THOUGH WE WOULD BE GOOD TENANTS because our rights are not protected.

HB 693 puts into law long overdue renters' rights that I have seen defeated over and over again in the Maryland General Assembly. It's time to make Maryland fair to renters, especially those who are poor and from low-wealth working families.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB 693.