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TESTIMONY ON SB0644 - POSITION: FAVORABLE

Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Just Cause Termination Provisions

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

FROM: David M. Friedman

My name is David Friedman. I am a resident of District 14 in Colesville/Cloverly. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB0644, Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Just Cause Termination Provisions.

I am an active member of Oseh Shalom, a Jewish Reconstructionist congregation located in Laurel, MD. Jewish tradition emphasizes that every person, regardless of race or income, should have a safe and stable home. One text particularly resonates with me - the prophet Isaiah understood that housing is more than a roof over one's head and that to deny a person safe housing is not only robbing them in the present but robbing their family for generations to come. As a long-time homeowner, I also appreciate the importance of housing stability and am concerned about the challenges that many renters face in Maryland's dynamic housing market. SB0644 would provide an important tool for both tenants and landlords and would place Maryland in step with [more than 15 states and jurisdictions](#) where just cause eviction has become the legal standard, including the District of Columbia, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Washington, Oregon, Philadelphia, and New York City.

This bill is particularly important to protect tenants from arbitrary, retaliatory, or discriminatory evictions, while not undermining legitimate business interests. Indeed, it adds to the toolbox that local jurisdictions in Maryland use to set a standard for responsible property management and assists in keeping families, workers, students, and seniors rooted in their communities. Crucially, SB0644 is an enabling measure, granting the authority, but not mandating, for Maryland counties and Baltimore to implement just cause eviction legislation that meets local needs.

In our dynamic housing market, Maryland's local jurisdictions should have all the tools they need to address the challenge of providing safe, fair, and affordable housing for residents. **I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB0477.**