

SB0644_AnnaRubin_FAV
Feb. 15, 2024
Anna Rubin
Columbia, MD 21045

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: Dr. Anna Rubin

My name is Anna Rubin. I am a resident of District 13. I am submitting this testimony supporting SB0644, the Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Just Cause Termination Provisions – commonly known as the Renters’ Rights Act.

I am a member of Columbia Jewish Congregation and act as the co-chair of its Social Action Committee and a member of the CJC Standing for Racial Justice Committee. I am also the chair of the Indivisible Howard County Immigration Action Team.

In every organization that I belong to, supporting housing justice is the foundation for a stable functioning community. Every person, regardless of race or income, should have a safe and stable home. But some landlords think that their own profit is more important than safety and stability for Black and brown renters, and they let the buildings they own fall into disrepair, or throw whole families out on the street to try to squeeze more money out of the next renters.

The prophet Micah 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 also robbing their family for generations to come. My father was born in present day Lithuania and he and his family were constantly moving to avoid programs and poverty. Similarly, when he and his family immigrated to the US in the pre-World War I period, they moved constantly, one step ahead or behind of the landlords and eviction. It took years for him to establish economic stability and support his parents and sisters and having stable homes was a huge achievement for the entire family.

Many poor citizens face a competitive housing market because of the lack of affordable housing. While addressing that issue is a long-term problem, we can help our communities survive and thrive now by passing this bill.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB0644.

Sincerely,
Dr. Anna Rubin

