

## Testimony in opposition of Senate Bill 481

I am Lynne Bratten, a retired public school educator who has owned and managed residential rental property in Salisbury since 1982. I am testifying against Senate Bill 481.

I seldom file failure to pay rent cases, but when I do; it is often because the tenant needs the court action to qualify for assistance from agencies. This bill would prohibit the landlord from recovering the increased court costs and may prohibit tenants from getting assistance.

The court requires a 10-day intent to file notice during which payment or arrangements are possible. After 10 days I can file and get a court date.

If the tenant needs the paper work or has not paid, a court appearance is held. If judgement favors the landlord, the tenant has 7 days to pay which includes weekend days.

This process takes close to 30 days from the start to the filing of a warrant of restitution. On the day of the sheriff's presence onsite for the eviction (often up to 4 weeks later) the tenant can pay but I must pay the workers I hired to remove the contents.

In addition, this bill limits the security deposit to one month's rent. This has been my policy for 40 years; however, with the most recent turnover and the damages left by a well vetted tenant after only two years my expenses are more than 3 times the monthly rent.

The requirement to offer tenants a right of refusal could delay the sale of my properties and could cost me a sale. I get offers to buy my properties as package deals with no inspections from buyers hoping to use 1031 exchanges, which are time sensitive.

Finally, expanding the government with another agency is not necessary. Publishing a tenant's bill of rights can be done by DHCD.

The adverse impact to me and other small landlords is significant. I ask that this bill receive an unfavorable report.

Lynne Pollitt Bratten  
Resident of Wicomico County Maryland  
Salisbury, Maryland  
OPPOSE Senate Bill 481

