



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: **HB 372 - Montgomery County and Prince George's County - Rent Court Workforce Solutions Pilot Program**

SPONSOR: **Delegates Harris and Stewart**

HEARING DATE: **February 21, 2024**

COMMITTEE: **Judiciary**

CONTACT: **Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS HB 372 - Montgomery County and Prince George's County - Rent Court Workforce Solutions Pilot Program**, which establishes the Rent Court Workforce Solutions Pilot Program to connect individuals facing eviction with workforce development services.

The three year pilot program provides \$100,000 per year per county to place a local workforce development professional in the District Court on days that rent court is in session. This workforce development professional would connect rent court litigants with workforce development services (e.g., job opportunities, training/upskilling opportunities, wraparound services, etc.) so that they can possibly prevent their eviction or avoid rent court in the future.

The concept is pretty simple – people showing up to rent court generally need workforce services the most. This bill makes it possible for Employ Prince Georges, and WorkSource Montgomery in Montgomery County, to reach them directly. The workforce development professional in the courthouse will get basic information from the rent court litigant (i.e., name, address, DOB, contact info, career interests/experiences) and EPG will follow up with them within 24-48 hours. It is also worth noting that EPG's services will not be limited just to rent court defendants, but really to all residents in the courthouse that day.

Should this bill pass, EPG will be able to reach many more Prince George's County residents, particularly those most in need of our services. Evictions and housing instability not only disrupts lives but also perpetuates cycles of poverty. This bill is a proactive approach to breaking that cycle. Even if we are unable to prevent the

eviction that brought them to court that day, connecting residents with higher paying jobs will prevent them from returning to rent court in the future.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS HB 372** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.