



NAACP

Maryland
STATE CONFERENCE

February 27, 2024

Environment and Transportation
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, Maryland

Re: HB 1114 – Real Property - Landlord and Tenant - Procedures for Failure to Pay Rent, Breach of Lease, and Tenant Holding Over

Members of the Committee,

Chairman, Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express the full support of the Maryland NAACP for HB 1114, a crucial piece of legislation that requires a landlord to provide certain notice to a tenant when a court has issued a warrant of restitution for a failure of a tenant to pay rent, a breach of lease, or a tenant holding over under certain circumstances; establishing certain procedures and requirements for the execution of a warrant for repossession; providing for the disposition of certain personal property following the execution of a warrant of restitution; etc.

It is imperative to recognize that eviction disproportionately impacts communities of color. The lack of reliable notice exacerbates this disparity, as marginalized tenants are often left uninformed and without recourse, further perpetuating cycles of poverty and instability. HB 1114 seeks to rectify this injustice by mandating landlords to provide tenants with a 14-day notice prior to eviction, affording them the opportunity to exercise their rights and make informed decisions.

Furthermore, HB 1114 introduces a much-needed reclamation period of ten days post-eviction, allowing tenants to retrieve essential personal belongings. This provision is particularly critical for marginalized communities who may lack the resources to swiftly relocate or replace their possessions. By aligning Maryland with states such as Washington D.C., New Jersey, and Virginia, HB 1114 acknowledges the fundamental right of tenants to secure their belongings and rebuild their lives with dignity.

Moreover, HB 1114 addresses the systemic neglect of neighborhoods by prohibiting the disposal of evicted tenants' belongings onto public streets. The current practice not only perpetuates blight but also symbolizes a disregard for the welfare of affected communities. HB 1114 mandates landlords to dispose of belongings in a proper and respectful manner, fostering cleaner and safer neighborhoods for all residents.

Additionally, HB 1114 alleviates undue financial burdens on landlords by eliminating the requirement for excessive resources during eviction proceedings. The implementation of a reclamation period reduces the need for a surplus workforce, ensuring that landlords can efficiently manage their properties without unnecessary expenses.

HB 1114 acknowledges the devastating consequences of housing insecurity that follow eviction, particularly for families and vulnerable individuals. Eviction disrupts lives, destabilizes communities, and exacerbates poverty cycles. Providing tenants with advance notice of eviction dates affords them crucial time to seek alternative housing arrangements, access support services, and avoid the trauma of homelessness. This legislation recognizes that stable housing is essential for the well-being and prosperity of families, and that adequate notice can significantly mitigate the disruptive effects of eviction, offering families a chance to navigate challenging circumstances with greater resilience and dignity.

In conclusion, HB 1114 represents an opportunity to address the intersecting challenges faced by families, break the cycle of poverty, and confront racial disparities entrenched within Maryland's eviction process. By providing tenants with adequate notice and a reclamation period, this legislation upholds principles of fairness and justice for all Marylanders. The Maryland NAACP urges the Committee to support HB 1114 and advance equity and dignity for tenants across our state.

Thank you for your attention to this vital matter.

In Service,

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