

CLINICAL LAW PROGRAM

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Testimony in Support of HB 0103 – FAVORABLE
Access to Counsel in Evictions – Task Force Termination and Special Fund
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The University of Maryland's Eviction Prevention Clinic exists because of Access to Counsel in Evictions funding from the Maryland Legal Services Corporation. I began the Clinic in December of 2022 after working nearly seven years at Maryland Legal Aid. To date, 34 students have completed the Clinic over the course of our four semesters, with another eight currently enrolled. We have provided legal services for around 110 clients over approximately 151 cases. Three clinic graduates have secured permanent post-graduate employment in legal services in Maryland. Another nine have completed summer internships or externships with various legal services organizations and intend to pursue legal services careers after graduation and the completion of their judicial clerkships.

The Clinic provides benefits beyond the representation of low-income Baltimore City tenants. It also provides a unique learning opportunity for law students. Through the Clinic, students develop professional skills in a supervised, practice-based setting. They learn how to interact with and provide legal services to low-income Marylanders in a client-centered way. For students, this experience is invaluable. Litigation-based clinics allow students to translate what they learn in their doctrinal courses into practical knowledge.

The Clinic also exposes students to the real-world need for Access to Counsel in Evictions and fosters interest in legal services careers and pro bono participation. By providing a positive and meaningful clinical experience, the Eviction Prevention Clinic shows students what a career in legal services looks like and shows that it is a realistic and fulfilling career option. Programs like the Eviction Prevention Clinic are essential in allowing law schools to create future generations of informed and passionate legal services attorneys. Moreover, for those students who pursue careers in other legal fields, the Clinic demonstrates the need for pro bono partnerships, and inspires those students to volunteer and help foster cultures of volunteerism in their practices.

¹ This testimony in support of this Bill represents the personal opinions of the faculty members of the respective clinics and is based on their knowledge and experience. This support may not represent the position of the University of Maryland Carey School of Law; the University of Maryland, Baltimore; or the University of Maryland System.