

Testimony on HB 709 Landlord and Tenant – Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies –
Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)
Hearing of the Environment and Transportation Committee, February 18, 2025
Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Committee

My name is Naima Robinson-Chaney, and I am asking you to pass the Good Cause Eviction bill. I live with my three teenage children in a home that we rent in Baltimore City, at least for now. I have been told by my landlord, a property management company, that my children and I have to leave. Earlier this month they sent me a notice to vacate in the next 60 days without giving me any reason why.

But I know the reason. I finally stood up to them. I was paying my rent timely every month, but they kept saying that I was behind on the rent. When I finally got a ledger of charges and payments from them, I learned that they charged me for an \$800 water bill that I had never seen before as well as a bunch of illegal fees – an administrative fee, excessive late fees, and legal fees. I've begged them to add me to the water bill account so that I can get help from the City's Water For All program. They've refused. I got an attorney to help me fight a failure to pay rent case in court because the landlord was taking my rent money and putting it to the illegal fees. We won the case! And then within 30 days of winning the case, they sent me the 60-day notice to terminate my rental.

Where will we go? The father of my children passed, and we live on a fixed income. I'm losing sleep, my children are losing sleep, and we're all on edge. Where are we going to go? All I want is to sleep somewhere safe and stable. But every time I ask the landlord questions about the fees or the lease, they refuse to respond. Instead, they just send me more harassing notices and add on more fees.

I don't want to move again. I don't want the kids to have to change schools again. I wanted to start my own childcare center, and I'm taking classes to become certified. But if I don't have a safe place to live, how can I become more financially secure?

I support the Good Cause Eviction bill. If this law had been in place, my landlord would have to state **why** – after I paid the rent every month – they want me and my children to have to leave. And the only reason they would be able to give is that I finally stood up to them. Please pass this important legislation.

Thank you

Naima Robinson-Chaney