

Subject: Strong Support for HB1177 - Tenant Repair and Maintenance Complaint Hotline

Dear Environment and Transportation Committee Members,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for **HB1177**, which proposes the creation of a Tenant Repair and Maintenance Complaint Hotline within the Office of Tenant and Landlord Affairs. As a Pupil Personnel Worker with the Howard County Public School System and a Community Organizer, I have worked closely with countless families who rent homes and apartments in desperate need of repairs. I have seen firsthand the frustration and helplessness of parents as they reached out to their landlords, only to be met with empty promises or, worse, threats of eviction or unjustified rent hikes in response to their requests for basic living conditions.

This bill offers an invaluable resource for tenants, providing a clear, accessible avenue for reporting repair and maintenance issues. It ensures that concerns are heard, acted upon promptly, and handled with fairness and impartiality, something sorely needed by the families I serve.

For many tenants, speaking out against a landlord can be daunting, especially for those without the resources or confidence to navigate the often-complex legal system. The hotline proposed by **HB1177** would offer a confidential platform for tenants to report issues without fear of retaliation, ensuring that they can stand up for their rights without the threat of losing their homes or facing other punitive measures. This will be especially empowering for tenants in underserved communities, who are often the most vulnerable.

The public health consequences of substandard housing are significant, and this bill takes an important step toward mitigating these risks. **HB1177** establishes a state-monitored system to ensure tenants receive the support they need and that landlords are held accountable for maintaining safe and habitable living conditions.

I am particularly pleased with the enforcement provisions of the bill, which empower the Office of Tenant and Landlord Affairs to take meaningful action—whether referring tenants to legal aid, working with local code enforcement, or pursuing other remedies. This proactive approach is not just about documenting complaints but about actively improving the quality of housing throughout Maryland.

Finally, the bill's focus on data collection and analysis will help identify patterns of violations and target areas in need of further intervention. This data-driven approach ensures that tenant concerns are addressed systematically and that persistent issues are not ignored.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the committee to pass **HB1177**. It represents a crucial step toward ensuring that all Maryland residents have access to safe, healthy, and habitable living conditions. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Tracey L. Williams
8312 Governor Grayson Way
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043
Tracey9093@gmail.com
(443) 253-4398