



Member Agencies:

211 Maryland
Baltimore Jewish Council
Behavioral Health System Baltimore
CASH Campaign of Maryland
Energy Advocates
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland
Family League of Baltimore
Fuel Fund of Maryland
Job Opportunities Task Force
Laurel Advocacy & Referral Services, Inc.
League of Women Voters of Maryland
Loyola University Maryland
Maryland Center on Economic Policy
Maryland Community Action Partnership
Maryland Family Network
Maryland Food Bank
Maryland Hunger Solutions
Paul's Place
St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore
Welfare Advocates

Marylanders Against Poverty

Abby Snyder, Co-Chair
P: (240) 593-6121
E: ASnyder@baltjc.org

Anne Wallerstedt, Co-Chair
P: (410) 991-7285
E: AWallerstedt@mdfoodbank.org

HB 896

Human Relations – Discrimination in Housing – Income-Based Housing Subsidies

Environment and Transportation Committee

February 18, 2025

The Maryland Alliance for the Poor (MAP) supports HB 896, which provides expanded tenant protections for renters using any income-based housing subsidy.

In 2020, the Maryland General Assembly passed the HOME Act, which prohibited discrimination for housing if the tenant was using specific housing vouchers. While laudable after many years of advocacy, in the years since it has become increasingly difficult to secure housing that is affordable, safe, and stable. Additionally, competing strains on household budgets, including for food, medical care, and transportation, have added to the housing crisis that many low-income renters face today.

It is imperative that Maryland maximize its affordable housing resources. A lack of stable housing can lead to a host of social ills, including homelessness, which can bring significant instability to Marylanders and their families that reverberate well-beyond housing. Economic mobility engines such as education and vocational opportunities and access to job and service centers are greatly reduced if a person's housing isn't stable. If then a landlord discriminates against a person or family based on how they anticipate paying that rent, then the issues become cyclical and compounded upon each other. The inability to locate housing because of income discrimination is therefore a barrier for low-income individuals and families who are trying to transition out of poverty and build economic stability.

Affordable housing remains one of the most critical needs for many Marylanders living in or near poverty. The passage of HB 896 will increase access to housing, decrease the incidence of homelessness and concentrated poverty, and increase the overall health and economic stability of Maryland communities.

MAP appreciates your consideration and requests your support of HB 896.

***Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP)** is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near poverty, and to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty.*