

Holly Hickman Testimony in support of House Bill 709

My name is Holly Hickman and I am here to tell my story and ask that you pass House Bill 709

I used to live in an apartment building in Frederick.

I live daily with a disability and I currently get support from The Arc of Frederick County and I care for 3 adult children with disabilities and a baby grandchild.

In early March last year, my ARC worker and I went to the rental office together to ask about when I would be signing my new lease. I was told that I had been sent a letter that my lease would not be renewed and I had to be out by the end of March. I never got that letter of non-renewal. I was really shocked and scared. I did not know how I could possibly move out so soon in just a few weeks.

Maryland Legal Aid helped buy me some time since I had not received the notice.

The current law lets a landlord decide to not renew my lease and kick me out for no reason at all. I always pay my rent on time but they still told me I had to move out. I felt so much anxiety. I could not focus, I had no energy, and I was so scared my belongings would be put out on the street. My grandson was newborn and I was also very scared we would lose him if we were homeless. I kept feeling like I was having a panic attack. My children and I started applying for other housing hoping to find somewhere to move as soon as possible so we would not be homeless.

If House Bill 709 is the law I would not have had to go through such a scary and stressful experience and my lease would have been renewed since I always pay my rent.