

**DATE:** February 18, 2025

**BILL NO.:** House Bill 767

**TITLE:** Real Property - Landlord and Tenant - Procedures for Failure to Pay Rent, Breach of Lease, and Tenant Holding Over (Tenant Possessions Recovery Act)

**COMMITTEE:** House Environment and Transportation Committee

### Letter of Support

#### **Description of Bill:**

House Bill 767 would require landlords to provide notice to a tenant fourteen days before a scheduled date of repossession, after a court has issued a warrant of restitution to the landlord. The legislation would also grant tenants ten days following their eviction to recover personal property from the premises or another secure location chosen by the landlord. During this period, the landlord is to hold and make available the former tenants' property without charge.

#### **Background and Analysis:**

Under current Maryland law, a landlord who is issued a warrant of restitution to evict a tenant does not need to provide any notice of the eviction date itself to the tenant. While tenants would have received notice for the lease violations that precipitated their eviction proceedings, the specific date of their eviction is often a surprise to them. As a result, Marylanders can have this warrant served while they are at work, taking care of family, or any other valid purpose. This legislation allows tenants the ability to use the fourteen-day period to either make plans to leave the property or even make use of their right of redemption, without them being caught by surprise by the arrival of a Sheriff.

Further, landlords are currently not required to allow evicted tenants to retrieve their personal property, after the eviction date. With that, Maryland renters can lose possessions like prescribed medications, personal documents, and anything else left in the property to the landlord. HB 767 would instead require landlords to hold the property for a limited time in a secure location, allowing the tenant to retrieve their property. While the benefit to an evicted tenant is apparent, communities at-large should benefit from the lack of personal belongings placed on sidewalks and streets in the aftermath of an eviction.

In summary, HB 767 would keep the eviction process focused on its legal purpose: putting the landlords property back into the hands of the landlord, and letting the tenant walk away with their personal belongings and dignity.

#### **DHCD Position**

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development respectfully requests a **favorable** report on HB 767.