

February 18, 2024

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TESTIMONY ON HB709 - POSITION: FAVORABLE

Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)

TO: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Mara Greengrass

My name is Mara Greengrass. I'm a resident of District 18 and I'm submitting this testimony in support of Good Cause Eviction.

As a Montgomery County resident for 25 years, a member of Congregation Beth El, and a neighbor who cares, I urge you to pass this enabling legislation. Let individual counties pass their own laws to fit local needs! The Montgomery County Council has already expressed interest in passing such legislation and should be allowed to do so.

Housing stability is a vital part of Jewish law and values and providing stable housing is one of the most important things for a community to do. The great 12th century scholar Maimonides specifically noted in the Mishneh Torah that landlords must give sufficient warning before terminating a lease, to ensure the tenants had time to find new housing.

Landlords should have to provide a valid reason before evicting tenants, such as violation of the lease, destruction of property, non-payment of rent, or illegal activity. In talking to my friends and neighbors, I've found everyone considers this requirement common-sense and entirely reasonable. Often, they tell me they're surprised it's not already possible in Maryland. Landlords should *not* be able to evict tenants due to personal feelings or in retaliation for tenants complaining about rental conditions.

In an uncertain world, it is our duty to try and keep tenants in their homes. It's cheaper for everyone to keep tenants housed than it is to let them be evicted, at which point we have more homeless people to take care of.

Everyone in Maryland deserves the right to stay in their home and the peace of mind that they can't be evicted unless they have done something wrong.

Please support Good Cause Eviction enabling legislation and let each Maryland county decide for themselves if they want to implement it. Help us to help tenants across Maryland. **I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB709.**