

Hearing In The Maryland House Of Delegates Set for February 18, 2025

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TESTIMONY ON HB0709
FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

**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

My name is Scott Webber, resident of Montgomery County, Maryland, submitting this testimony in support of HB 0709 with minor amendments.

As a licensed Realtor [Real Estate Salesperson] in Maryland who engages in the rental market, it would be great for business to have rapid turnover every year or two... or even several times a year, each round producing another commission. However, as a homeowner, a landlord, a renter, taxpayer, socially responsible resident, and a person of faith, I am also acutely aware that housing stability is essential for any community to thrive. Further, the cost of housing instability is staggering, and its impact is felt across nearly every element of society. In other words, housing stability is both fiscally and socially reasonable, responsible, and required.

Evictions are disruptive and costly, both to landlords, but disproportionately to tenants, and frequently, tenants who can least afford any such crisis. At the same time, evictions are also necessary under certain circumstances, involving not only lease violations by tenants, but the desire of a property owner to use the property for their own purposes. In such circumstances, termination of a lease / eviction - after notice - is reasonable, just and fair.

I can further testify that evictions often result in - sometimes substantial - costs to taxpayers, as evicted tenants suddenly become reliant upon government services, and/or governmentally funded partners and/or non-profits to provide emergency housing, food, transportation and other essential needs for a suddenly unhoused family, and not just for the adult rental signatories, but also for their dependant children, and/or senior parents. Stable housing policy is wise fiscal policy.

Notwithstanding the practicalities of limiting tenant turnover, eviction solely for the purpose of switching otherwise abiding tenants, with alternative and/or preferentially selected tenants - **WITHOUT GOOD CAUSE** - is nothing short of Fair Housing discrimination! Such

discriminatory behavior should not be allowed, any more than a restaurant being allowed to selectively seat - or turn away - diners based on their names, or a health club's ability to cancel a gym membership to one family simply because some other family is willing to pay more, unless there is reasonable justification - Good Cause - such as a history of disruption, or failure to follow membership policies. Fairness and equality of access - and maintenance - to housing must be the law of the land [and the buildings sitting upon].

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS:

Page 4. Line 27. Changing 'FIRST-CLASS MAIL WITH A CERTIFICATE OF MAILING' TO 'CERTIFIED MAIL' to make it consistent with the vast majority of land-use notification Statutes and Rules.

Page 6. Line 5. Changing 'NOTICE' TO 'WRITTEN NOTICE' to be consistent with similar requirements in the Statute.

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I respectfully urge this committee to return a FAVORABLE report on HB0709 with the Proposed Amendments, *supra*.

Most Sincerely,

~Scott Webber