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**HB 1257 - Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases - Fee Disclosures**  
**Hearing before the House Environment and Transportation Committee,**  
**February 28, 2025**

**Position: SUPPORT (FAV)**

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The Public Justice Center (PJC) is a nonprofit public interest law firm that stands with tenants to protect and expand their rights to safe, habitable, affordable, and non-discriminatory housing. PJC is a member of Renters United Maryland. **PJC urges the Committee to issue a Favorable Report on HB 1257.**

HB 1257 is a simple measure to provide for greater fee transparency in residential leasing. At PJC we frequently see landlord ledgers for our clients that contain numerous mandatory fees of questionable legality. Some may be authorized by fine print buried on page 42 of a 50-page lease. "Trash fees" or "Administrative fees" are common examples. HB 1257 does not attempt to outlaw these extremely dubious fees that have no corresponding cost to the landlord. HB 1257 only provides that if the landlord intends to charge such a mandatory fee, it will be provided for in the rental rate for the property that is advertised or listed separately and upfront if it is due at a different time than the rent. This is the kind of basic transparency that should already be part of every landlord's practice. HB 1257 will allow tenants to more easily compare one apartment to another when deciding where to lease – rather than incentivizing landlords to hide their mandatory fees and spring them upon the tenant buried in a 50-page lease right before signing.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask the committee for a **favorable report on HB 1257.**