

Kenneth Lemberg, Silver Spring resident, advocates **favorable support for HB 0709, Good Cause Eviction**

My name is Kenneth Lemberg, I am a Staff Attorney for a small nonprofit legal firm, based in the DC Metro area. I work with Maryland veterans across the state, particularly in the Baltimore area, representing them on housing/homelessness matters, veteran benefits, and related civil issues. Some of my clients have been forced out/evicted of their rental homes/apartments, with at best dubious reasons provided by the landlord. This has resulted in scrambling for new housing and at worst, homelessness, creating substantial, additional stress for these veterans, who may already have other life complicating problems, such as significant disabilities.

Here are some specific examples:

- A client, already very ill, was forced to move out of her long-held apartment because of clutter. The landlord did not seem very willing to help her with this "situation."
- A client was paid toward the end of the month and needed to negotiate a rent paying arrangement with the landlord. This client was also concerned about upkeep of the rental house by the landlord, expressing that it was insufficient. She was forced to move, with arguably too little notice. She has since been staying indefinitely at a hotel property, with limited funds and several children. She feels she has been discriminated against.
- Yet another client was told that his lease would not be renewed. He had pointed out issues with the infrastructure of the rental house. He is in a transitional situation while he awaits new housing.
- There is the client who was forced to move out, before she could make sufficient arrangements to move out her personal belongings. Again, the reason for eviction appears somewhat unclear.

A fair number of my clients are indigent and may depend on housing vouchers and/or limited public benefits. They may be fully disabled. They should not have to risk homelessness when they are given insufficient and/or no reason at all. They certainly should not be discriminated against or retaliated against for categories such as veteran or voucher status and against speaking up for insufficiently maintained rental housing. Additionally, as in the case of two of my clients, having on the public record that they were evicted makes it more difficult to secure the next rental home/apartment, with background checks on prospective tenants.

In short, Maryland veterans have served their country and deserve the benefits of good cause eviction, as do other state residents. We seek as a society to minimize the dangers of unstable housing. Once again, **I urge favorable support for Good Cause Eviction, House Bill 709.**

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