

HB709
Good Cause Eviction

Environment and Transportation Committee

February 18th 2025**Support**

Catholic Charities of Baltimore supports HB709, which authorizes counties to adopt local laws requiring landlords who own six or more residential rental units to demonstrate good cause before refusing to renew a lease or terminating a holdover tenancy. This bill establishes specific grounds that constitute good cause, such as substantial lease violations, illegal activity, or the need for major renovations, while protecting both tenant rights and legitimate landlord interests.

For a century, Catholic Charities has provided care and services to improve the lives of Marylanders in need. We accompany Marylanders as they age with dignity, support their pursuit of employment and career advancement, heal from trauma and addiction, achieve independence, prepare for educational success, and welcome immigrant neighbors into Maryland communities.

In Maryland, over 5,000 families are made homeless each year due to eviction, and over 30,000 Marylanders experience homelessness annually. As Maryland's largest private provider of human services, we see up close how housing instability impacts families and individuals. At Sarah's House in Anne Arundel County, we provide essential services like emergency shelter, supportive housing, and other resources for families experiencing homelessness. We serve up to 125 people every day, half of whom are children. In addition to Sarah's House, Catholic Charities offers other programs like the **Weinberg Housing and Resource Center**, which serves adult men and women experiencing homelessness, and **My Sister's Place Women's Center**, a comprehensive day resource center for women and children facing homelessness in Baltimore City.

At Catholic Charities, two of our core pillars are supporting families and children, and helping individuals achieve independence. Our staff often work with clients who face unstable housing, which makes it harder for them to keep their jobs, ensure their children stay in school, and build stable lives in their communities. In our emergency shelters, we see the deep emotional pain that families go through when they are forced to leave their homes without a good reason. HB 709 aligns with our mission by protecting families from unjust evictions, which can severely impact children's education and emotional well-being, while hindering a family's ability to thrive. By requiring landlords to show "good cause" before eviction, this bill helps ensure families have the stability they need to focus on personal growth, education, and career advancement—critical steps toward achieving independence. This protection fosters the stability that allows families to build self-sufficiency without the constant fear of losing their homes.

For these reasons, Catholic Charities of Baltimore urges the committee to issue a favorable report for HB709.

Submitted By: Madelin Martinez, Assistant Director of Advocacy