



## GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL

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### **Position Statement in Support of HB709/SB651: Landlord and Tenant – Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies – Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)**

The City of Greenbelt supports HB709/SB651, a crucial piece of legislation aimed at strengthening tenant protections across Maryland. This bill provides an essential framework for counties to adopt local laws that ensure residential tenants are safeguarded from arbitrary lease non-renewals and evictions. By instituting a "good cause" requirement for landlords, the bill offers a fair, transparent, and equitable approach to landlord-tenant relationships.

One of the key provisions of HB709/SB651 is the requirement that landlords provide a valid and substantiated reason for terminating a tenancy or not renewing a lease. This provision is of utmost importance in protecting tenants from unfair treatment. A tenant's right to stable housing should not be subject to the whims of landlords, and this bill provides tenants with the security of knowing that eviction or lease non-renewal is only possible under specific, clearly defined circumstances. Good cause, as defined by the bill, includes substantial breach of lease terms, damage to property, illegal activity, or disorderly conduct by the tenant, providing a fair and balanced approach.

Additionally, the bill ensures greater transparency by requiring landlords to inform tenants whether they are subject to the local good cause provisions. The requirement for landlords to disclose information about the ownership and membership of entities with interests in the rental property, and to use standardized forms when renewing leases or terminating tenancies, promotes accountability and reduces the potential for abuse.

Importantly, the bill also empowers tenants by providing them with legal recourse if they face unjust evictions. If a landlord claims termination is not based on good cause, or asserts that they are exempt from the local good cause law, they must provide evidence through documentation when filing complaints in court. This provision offers tenants a fair avenue to challenge unfair eviction practices.

Furthermore, the establishment of the Office of Tenant and Landlord Affairs in the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to develop and oversee the implementation of compliance forms ensures that the provisions of this bill are consistently applied and monitored.

By supporting HB709/SB651, the City of Greenbelt affirms its commitment to protecting the rights of tenants and fostering a more just and equitable housing environment. This bill is a step forward in providing tenants with stability, security, and a clear process for resolving disputes, ultimately contributing to the well-being and fairness in our communities.

We urge the Maryland General Assembly to pass HB709/SB651 and support stronger tenant protections throughout the state.

For questions or more information, please contact Josué Salmerón, City Manager, at [jsalmeron@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:jsalmeron@greenbeltmd.gov).