

**Testimony Before the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
February 18, 2025**

**Senate Bill 651  
Landlord and Tenant – Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies –  
Local Good Cause Termination  
(Good Cause Eviction)**

**\*\*SUPPORT\*\***

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, Maryland Chapter (NASW-MD), we would like to express our strong support for Senate Bill 651 Landlord and Tenant – Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies – Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction).

As social workers, we believe that housing is a human right. We serve many tenants throughout Maryland who experience great harm when they are evicted without cause. Sometimes corporate landlords refuse to renew a lease because tenants have complained about hazardous conditions, or because the landlord is discriminating against tenants based on their disability, race, or sexual orientation. When corporate landlords engage in no-cause evictions, families lose their homes, their belongings, and often their support networks, schools, and communities. **Five thousand Marylanders are made homeless by evictions every year.**

We support this bill because it gives local governments the opportunity to enact legislation that will require landlords to provide a legitimate reason for filing for eviction. This would result in fewer discriminatory and exploitive evictions and would hold landlords accountable for actions that greatly impact tenants' lives.

This enabling legislation would provide a no-cost way to strengthen communities, prevent homelessness, and hold corporate landlords to account. Eight states and over twenty-three localities have already passed similar laws. Maryland is one of only five states that prohibits counties from enacting Good Cause Eviction legislation.

This bill would not prohibit landlords from evicting tenants for good cause, including failure to pay rent, causing damage to the property, or other substantial breaches of the lease. The bill does not apply to small landlords who rent five units or fewer.

It is time for Maryland to stand with hard-working Marylanders who deserve safe and stable homes in which to raise their families.

For these reasons, we ask that you give a favorable report on Senate Bill 651.

Respectfully,

Karessa Proctor, BSW, MSW  
Executive Director, NASW-MD