

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB0651

Landlord and Tenant Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)

FAVORABLE

TO: Chair William C. Smith, Jr., Vice Chair Senator Jeff Waldstreicher and all members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee.

FROM: Lynn R. Mortoro, citizen of Maryland

DATE: February 18, 2025

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher and members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in favor of this bill.

I have been a citizen of Maryland for 8 years. I have had experience with several groups serving the homeless and low income people. We desperately need protections for this group of people. We need to be their voice.

Currently in Maryland, corporate landlords can evict a tenant for *no good reason* and as a result many Marylanders are facing severe housing instability. In our state, 5,000+ families are made homeless each year because of an eviction and more than 30,000 Marylanders experience homelessness each year. There is a dire need to curb evictions and keep Marylanders rooted in our communities.

SB651 would allow local jurisdictions the ability to pass good cause laws which simply require transparency and accountability from corporate landlords for why they are choosing to evict a tenant. Again, this is local enabling legislation – not a state mandate – so that counties may pass good cause within the framework of their housing needs and master plan. Maryland is one of only five states that explicitly prohibits counties from passing Good Cause Eviction laws.

Research shows that good cause eviction laws greatly decrease eviction filings meaning that fewer Marylanders would be at risk of being put out of their homes. This would mean fewer evictions for Black Maryland residents who – because of centuries of government-sponsored housing discrimination – are disproportionately impacted by evictions. 1 in 4 Black children in renting households face the threat of eviction each year due to structural and systemic racism. The research is also clear that Good Cause Eviction has [no impact on new housing development](#).

As Maryland's budget deficit looms, passing enabling legislation for local Good Cause Eviction laws would save the state money on support programs and provide a no-cost way to prevent homelessness, strengthen our communities, and hold corporate landlords to account.

I strongly urge a FAVORABLE report on this bill.
Thank you