



CITY TAKOMA OF PARK MARYLAND

**Support Senate Bill 651 - Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies -
Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)
House Environment & Transportation Committee
February 18, 2025**

The City of Takoma Park supports and urges favorable consideration of SB 651.

Stable housing is essential for daily life as it meets a basic human need.

SB 651 aims to promote stable housing by allowing counties to decide when it is appropriate not to renew rental agreements. Landlords and property owners can file "tenant holding over" cases if they choose not to renew a lease, which can involve reasons such as significant breach of lease, illegal activity by the tenant, or plans to remove the property from the rental market. However, current law does not require landlords to have a reason to evict tenants when a lease expires. This situation leaves families susceptible to eviction without cause. Legal assistance organizations have noted an increase in "tenant holding over" cases, resulting in more evictions.

SB 651 specifies various reasonable circumstances that qualify as causes for not renewing a lease. The City of Takoma Park agrees with these circumstances. Furthermore, the bill provides protections for renters against unfair treatment, discrimination, or unexpected evictions that could negatively impact individuals, families, and communities.

We have seen firsthand the heartbreak of involuntary displacement. Residents hurriedly packing or leaving their belongings on the street, often ruined by weather. Older adults and young families scrambling for shelter. Children having to move from one school to another. This upheaval affects not just the individuals and families but our entire community. The City has programs to help residents facing eviction. Yet, we still need to close a significant loophole to prevent these forced displacements.

The bill defines procedures and valid reasons for evictions, enabling landlords to evict tenants who violate their lease, engage in criminal activities, threaten other tenants, or fail to pay rent. It is important that eventually municipalities have clear authority to enforce similar measures in instances in which their respective county do not enact this legislation. However, this bill is a crucial step forward.

For these reasons, Takoma Park urges a favorable report on SB 651 so that counties and eventually municipalities can act on this issue. We thank Senator Smith for his leadership on this matter.