



Testimony - HB 774,
Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause
Termination (Good Cause Eviction)
Favorable
House Economic Matters Committee
February 26, 2026
Christopher C. Cano, MPA
Director of Political & Legislative Affairs on Behalf of SEIU Local 500

Honorable Chairwoman Valderrama & Members of the House Economic Matters
Committee:

SEIU Local 500 represents more than 20,000 public service workers across Maryland, including early childhood educators, school support professionals, higher education faculty, and public service workers. For many of our members, housing costs are the single largest monthly expense, and housing instability directly threatens workers' ability to remain employed, care for their families, and continue serving their communities.

House Bill 774 provides counties with the authority to adopt local good cause eviction protections for tenants, a measured and responsible approach that balances tenant stability with landlord rights. By limiting these protections to larger landlords—those owning six or more residential rental units—and by clearly defining allowable grounds for termination, the bill ensures that responsible property owners can still manage their properties while preventing arbitrary or retaliatory evictions.

SEIU Local 500 strongly supports the bill's emphasis on transparency and due process. Requiring landlords to disclose whether they are subject to a local good cause law, to state the reason for nonrenewal or termination, and to plead specific facts in court helps ensure that tenants understand their rights and that eviction proceedings are fair and accountable. These provisions are especially important for working families who may lack access to legal resources and are most vulnerable to sudden displacement.

Housing stability is a workforce issue. When workers are forced to move with little or no notice, communities lose experienced public servants, students face disruptions in their education, and local governments incur higher costs related to homelessness, emergency services, and turnover. Good cause protections help prevent these outcomes while allowing counties the flexibility to respond to local housing market conditions.

House Bill 774 does not mandate a statewide policy. Instead, it respects local decision-making by authorizing counties to act if they determine that good cause protections are necessary. This local-option framework recognizes that housing challenges vary across Maryland and that local governments are best positioned to craft solutions that meet their residents' needs.

For these reasons, SEIU Local 500 urges a favorable report on House Bill 774.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Christopher C. Cano, MPA
Director of Political & Legislative Affairs
SEIU Local 500