MARYLAND MULTI-HOUSING ASSOCIATION, INC.

House Bill 62

Committee: Economic Matters
Bill: House Bill 62 Arundel County – Summons for Actions to Repossess for Failure to Pay Rent – Alterations
Date: February 5th, 2026
Position: Unfavorable

The Maryland Multi-Housing Association (MMHA) is a professional trade association established in 1996, whose members consist of owners and managers of more than 214,000 rental housing homes in over 1015 apartment communities. Our members house over 571,000 residents of the State of Maryland. MMHA also represents over 270 associate member companies who supply goods and services to the multi-housing industry. In Anne Arundel County, our members own and or manage over 27,000 rental housing homes in over 110 apartment communities housing over 70,000 county residents.

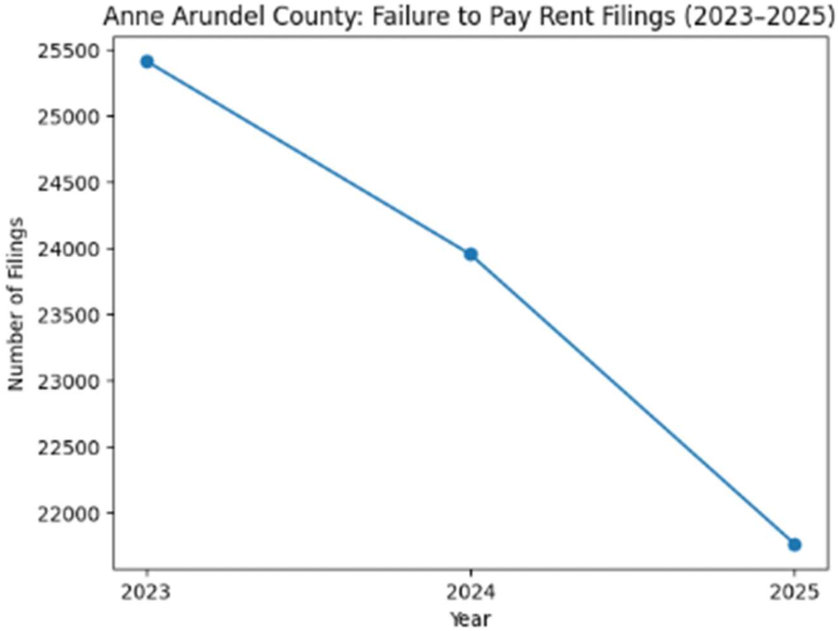
House Bill 62 ("HB 62") would require the District Court for Anne Arundel County to issue its summons for a trial to repossess for failure to pay rent to any constable or sheriff's designee, as well as grant the same authority and responsibility as a constable or sheriff in an action to repossess for a failure to pay rent ("FTPR"). Additionally, HB 62 would set the date of the trial for an FTPR 30 days from the filing of the complaint. The District Court would also be prohibited from directing a constable or sheriff's designee to serve process to appear before the District Court in a FTPR if the number of matters before the District Court that day exceeds 100.

MMHA has <u>serious</u> concerns with HB 62 as introduced for the following reasons:

I. This bill is unnecessary – FTPR filings are going <u>down</u> in Anne Arundel County.

One would assume that the rationale for this bill is that the Anne Arundel County Sheriff's Office and District Court of Anne Arundel County are overwhelmed by the amount of FTPR filings coming down the pipeline in the county and therefore require state intervention to alleviate the issue. The problem with this rationale is that it is **incorrect.** Per the data that is publicly available on the District Court of Maryland's website[1], and with the assumption that December 2025 data is an average for the rest of 2025 (as the data for the month of December 2025 has not been finalized), **FTPR filings have declined annually from 25,412 to 21,763, or by <u>14.4%,</u> from 2023 to 2025 in Anne Arundel County.** With these reductions in filings, there is a falling number of FTPRs that need to be both scheduled by the court or given service by the Sheriff's Office, thus eliminating a justification to set the trial 30 days out or capping the FTPRs before the county court that day by 100.

[1] https://www.courts.state.md.us/district/about



II. Changes to local law should assist the Sheriff's Office workload.

As this bill gets debated, a local bill sponsored by the Anne Arundel County Chair is either about to, or has passed, that will drastically change how the eviction process will be done in Anne Arundel County going forward. Relevant to this state bill, Anne Arundel County Council Bill 101-25[2] will set a "lock and leave" eviction policy for the county similar to that set in Baltimore City. Instead of the previous eviction process of requiring two deputies to be there for an eviction that can take an extended period of time during a day, the Sheriff's Office can have one deputy oversee an eviction by being present for the change of locks. In theory, this should improve the Sheriff's workload and free up more deputies to attend to other matters.

III. Extending the eviction process arbitrarily will raise rents.

HB 62 would require that the District Court of Anne Arundel County arbitrarily set the trial for an FTPR action **30 days after the filing of the complaint and cap the number of FTPRs that could be heard that day in court to 100.** Besides the fact that these provisions are found nowhere else statewide, and that it effectively usurps the ability of the Administrative Judge for the District Court of Maryland for Anne Arundel County to control their own courtroom schedules, this delay would only prolong the eviction process. As is current state law, housing providers are prevented from filing on an FTPR without providing a 10 day notice of intent. Assuming the housing provider provides the notice of intent after the 1st day of missed rent, it would take **at least 40+1 days for the housing provider and tenant to simply appear before a judge in an FTPR action.** In a county where it already takes at **least 2 months** for a housing provider to reclaim possession of a delinquent property, this would only further delay the process for a housing provider to begin recouping lost revenue. For apartment communities, this prolongment will result in higher rents for paying tenants.

While MMHA is supportive of the concept of the county utilizing constables and/or private process servers, for the reasons outlined above, MMHA must urge an unfavorable report on HB62.

Please contact Matthew Pipkin, Jr. at (443) 995-4342 or mpipkin@mmhaonline.org with any questions

[2] https://www.aacounty.org/county-council/legislation/bill-no-101-25