



TESTIMONY
Maryland General Assembly
Economic Matters Committee
In Favor of HB 774—Good-Cause, Local Enabling

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Good afternoon, Chairman Valderrama and Vice Chair Charkoudian and Committee Members.

The Montgomery County Renters Alliance is an alliance of more than 30 labor, community, religious, political and civic action organizations and thousands of renters. We are Maryland’s first and only regional nonprofit dedicated exclusively to renter outreach, education, organizing and advocacy and the leading co-founders of Renters United Maryland.

The Renters Alliance is in favor of **HB0774 that will simply authorize local jurisdictions to enact just-cause protections for their renting residents in whatever form they choose, if any.** We are especially grateful to our friend and colleague Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins and the many other co-sponsors of this legislation. We are also grateful to Speaker Pena-Melnyk for her support and the House of Delegates who, in 2023, supported passage of this legislation with a vote of 96-37.

Committee members, nothing in the bill has changed since then except the growing evidence, which will be detailed by our expert witnesses, demonstrating the good-cause eviction and other renter protections have little or no impact on multi-housing development.

Just-cause eviction protection is a fundamental protection for anyone who understands that our communities have a public policy interest in stable, affordable, quality rental housing. Without such protections, communities will see increases in crime rates, health and safety net costs, decreased academic achievement for children in our schools and lost prosperity.

The Renters Alliance has supported just-cause legislation for more than a decade urging Maryland to catch up to other states, including Washington D.C., New York, New Jersey, California, with long standing renter populations. As Maryland’s renter population grows from 23% in 2007 to nearly 40% today, it’s time for the Maryland General Assembly to grant this fundamental protection that says no one should be evicted from their home without a good reason.

This bill simply enables local jurisdictions to choose to enact this protection or not. We urge you to give them that option.

We strongly urge a favorable report.

Thank you

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