



MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE

February 26<sup>th</sup> 2026

HB774

**Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)**  
**Economic Matters Committee**  
**Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of **House Bill 774**. The Maryland Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

**House Bill 774** authorizes counties to adopt local “Good Cause” eviction protections, which would prevent landlords from declining to renew a lease or ending a holdover tenancy without a legitimate, clearly defined reason. If a county passes such a law, landlords would be required to provide tenants with written notice explaining whether the property is covered by the local ordinance. The bill also directs the Office of Tenant and Landlord Affairs within the Department of Housing and Community Development to develop consistent forms to ensure tenants receive accurate information. Creating a clear framework for transparency, accountability, and fair treatment for tenants across Maryland.

**House Bill 774** promotes housing stability and prevents unjust or arbitrary evictions. By giving counties, the option to implement Good Cause protections, the legislation helps ensure that Maryland families cannot be displaced without a valid reason—such as nonpayment of rent, violation of lease terms, or the landlord’s legitimate need to reclaim the property. Stable housing reduces homelessness, keeps children anchored in their schools, and prevents families from being forced into crisis due to sudden loss of shelter. This bill offers counties a flexible, practical tool to safeguard residents while still respecting the rights of responsible landlords.

Safe and stable housing is a basic human necessity—one that allows individuals, families, and entire communities to thrive. Yet far too many people are forced to live with the crushing uncertainty of not knowing whether they will have a place to call home, even when they have done everything required of them as responsible tenants. This instability creates deep emotional turmoil: families endure sleepless nights, overwhelming anxiety, and the constant fear of being uprooted without cause. The stress extends far beyond the loss of a roof—parents may need to call off work, risking their jobs; children may be forced to change schools, leaving behind teachers and friends; entire households must start over from nothing, through no fault of their own. No family should have to endure such hardship simply to maintain a stable, dignified life.

We are not asking landlords to shoulder the burden of criminal behavior or to be penalized for situations beyond their control. Rather, we are simply asking for a clear and fair explanation when an eviction is issued, so that individuals and families are not left with the crippling anxiety of wondering what they did wrong or why their stability was taken from them.

Allowing counties to adopt Good Cause eviction standards provides families with peace of mind that they will not lose their homes without reason or due process. This bill strengthens communities, supports family stability, and aligns with our moral responsibility to protect the dignity of every Maryland resident.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference urges a favorable report on **House Bill 774**.