

To: House Economic Matters Committee

From: Robin L. Jacobs, 418 Fawcett St; Baltimore, MD 21211

Date: February 21, 2026

Subject: SUPPORT for HB 774 - Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)

Dear Committee,

My name is Robin L. Jacobs, and I am a resident of Baltimore City.

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 774 - Local Good Cause Termination.

Currently, in Maryland, landlords can evict tenants or refuse to renew a lease without providing any reason. This allows for unjust, retaliatory, and discriminatory actions against renters, causing severe housing instability and contributing to homelessness for thousands of families.

I also urge the Committee to pass a clean HB 774 and reject poison pill amendments that would force counties and renters to choose between having strong rent stabilization and good cause eviction protections. This is a false choice. We need stable rents and stable homes.

As a long-term renter in Baltimore City who also spent years representing community groups and clients of Legal Aid on housing issues, I regularly field calls from fellow tenants facing unfair evictions. I saw firsthand the wave of unfair evictions during the pandemic, even when moratoriums were supposed to keep people housed. The results are more unhoused neighbors and unstable communities and families. Up to 25% of households who are evicted become homeless. Currently, over 5,000 Maryland families are made homeless each year because of an eviction. Good Cause Eviction is a no-cost way for Maryland to prevent more families from becoming homeless at a time in which the federal government is shredding the social safety net.

This bill allows families to remain rooted in their schools, jobs, and support networks, benefiting social stability and preventing the upheaval caused by sudden eviction.

I also work on ensuring safe conditions in housing, and I know many tenants fear eviction for reporting unsafe conditions. HB 774 would help prevent corporate landlords from evicting tenants who have raised concerns about living conditions, or organized to demand repairs necessary to ensure safety.

Good cause eviction is not about preventing landlords from removing tenants who break the rules—it is about ensuring fairness and transparency. HB 774 will lift unfair restrictions that currently *prevent* Maryland counties from passing good cause eviction legislation if they want to and give residents the opportunity to stay rooted in their communities if they are abiding by the lease. Maryland is currently one of only five states that prohibit counties from passing Good Cause Eviction Law.

Eight states, including many surrounding us, have already passed similar “Good Cause” protections. It is time for Maryland to join them and ensure that “no reason” evictions are no longer legal.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on HB 774.

Sincerely,

/s/

Robin L. Jacobs