



**HB434 Residential Leases – Use of Algorithmic Device by Landlord to Determine Rent, 3
Occupancy, and Lease Terms – Prohibition
Position: Favorable**

February 19, 2026

The Honorable Kris Valderrama, Chair
Economic Matters Committee
Room 230, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
cc: Members, House Economic Matters

Chair Valderrama and Members of the Committee:

Economic Action Maryland Fund is here in strong support of HB434 prohibits landlords from using technology to fix prices.

A free and fair marketplace relies on competition where firms and producers compete for consumers based on price and quality. If the market is functioning, consumers decide to make purchases based on their preferences, price elasticity, and quality. When companies collude and fix prices, consumers lose out.

Last year, opponents noted that it would be prudent to wait until lawsuits filed against [RealPage](#) were decided. [RealPage](#) was sued for colluding to raise rental prices by deploying technology that would recommend rental prices to property managers using competitors data. In November 2025, the Department of Justice and Real Page reached a [settlement](#) that prohibits Real Page from using or training AI using certain non-public data as well as guardrails around its revenue management product.

In the Baltimore-Columbia-Towson area, 14% of multi-family units are managed by property companies named in the price-fixing lawsuits. RealPages algorithms set prices for more than 100,000 apartments across Maryland.

In 2023 [53.3%](#) of Maryland tenants were cost-burdened, meaning they spent more than 30% of their income on rent. The real costs of housing, insurance, utilities, and food prices have increased 22% since 2020 for working families in Maryland. Families are struggling paycheck to paycheck while property management companies across Maryland use private data to fix prices and increase profits at the expense of cash-strapped tenants.

Economic Action (formerly the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition) champions economic rights and housing justice through advocacy, research, consumer education, and direct service. Our 12,500 supporters include consumer advocates, practitioners, and low-income and working families throughout Maryland.

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HB434 expands on the settlement by extending the prohibitions in the settlement to any property management company in Maryland. It states simply that price-fixing is illegal, as it has been since the Sherman Act of 1890, and that it remains wrong whether conducted in a backroom with a handshake or by joint use of shared data and technology.

HB434 promotes a free and fair competitive marketplace, protects personal private data, and protects tenants by prohibiting landlords from using algorithms to set rental prices.

For all these reasons, we support HB434 and urge a favorable report.

Best,

Marceline White
Executive Director

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