

# Office Of Councilmember Kristin Mink

## Montgomery County - District 5

### HB 0774 - Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)

Hearing before the House Economic Matters Committee, Feb. 24, 2026

#### Position: SUPPORT (FAV)

Dear Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian, and members of the House Economic Matters Committee,

I am writing today to urge a favorable report on House Bill 774 enabling localities to implement “Good Cause” requirements for landlords to seek evictions against tenants. Speaking from my personal experience working with renters in my district: We need this bill passed, we need it clean, and we need it now. Montgomery County is 40% renters, and my office receives frequent, regular constituent inquiries from families who have reported severe housing code violations and are facing landlord retaliation, including eviction proceedings and threats of eviction, as well as from families who can no longer bear their appalling conditions but are afraid to demand better due to lack of protection from retaliatory evictions.

Maryland residents are making choices between keeping a roof over their heads and living with severe roach, rodent, and bedbug infestations; lack of working heating and cooling; broken appliances; severe leaks and the mold that results. Parents are tucking their children's pajama pants into their socks to try to protect them from pests, shifting furniture from room to room depending on leaks and air quality, debating whether they can seek help from code enforcement or my office or through tenant organizing, or if that would create too much of an eviction risk.

Simply requiring that landlords have a *Good Cause* in order to evict a tenant is a baseline, common sense measure to help tenants stay housed while accessing the safe housing conditions our existing laws are supposed to guarantee. Landlords who are already doing the right thing – who do not rely on the ability to wield retaliatory, arbitrary, or discriminatory evictions as part of their business model – will be unaffected.

Given last year's conversations, I want to re-emphasize the **widespread rejection by local legislators of potential amendments that would undercut local authority or pit Good Cause protections against tools for maintaining affordable housing.**

Last year, I led a sign-on letter (attached) of nearly 50 local officials across 18 jurisdictions urging the legislature to reject any amendments that would create a local preemption, including any amendment that would preempt local authority to maintain or adopt vacancy control. The letter was signed by:

- a majority of the Prince George's County Council,
- a majority of the Montgomery County Council, Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich,
- a majority of the Baltimore City Council, Baltimore City Mayor Brandon Scott, and Baltimore City Comptroller Bill Henry,

- Anne Arundel County Executive Steuart Pittman,
- County Councilmembers from Howard, Frederick, and Baltimore Counties,
- a majority of the Takoma Park City Council, and Takoma Park Mayor Talisha Searcy,
- and Mayors and City Councilmembers from ten additional municipalities.

As we said last year: “Increasing housing supply and protecting existing affordable housing are *both* essential components of effective housing policy. Policies for both goals can and do coexist in our jurisdictions. **We ask that as you consider and hopefully pass legislation opening up access to more housing stability tools like Good Cause, you continue to leave implementation decisions, as well as vacancy control, to be discussed locally.**”

Vacancy control is a fundamental tool for maintaining affordable housing stock and increasing housing stability. Without vacancy control, rent stabilization is rendered largely ineffective: each time a renter moves (or is evicted), landlords can bypass rent increase guidelines. As such:

- Significant research confirms that vacancy control reduces rents compared to areas with rent regulations that lack vacancy control.<sup>1</sup>
- Rent regulated jurisdictions with vacancy controls have lower tenant turnover than those without.<sup>2</sup>
- “Studies have shown that cities with vacancy control...experienced an increase in their share of Black and Latinx renters and were generally more affordable to low-income households. **Conversely, jurisdictions with vacancy decontrol were less affordable and disproportionately displaced Black renters.**”<sup>3</sup>

Good Cause legislation is desperately needed, and local jurisdictions should not be forced to remove or rule out affordability tools in order to implement it. I urge you to provide a favorable report for a clean HB 774, enabling us to finally provide this basic protection to the nearly one in three Maryland households who rent their homes. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,



Kristin Mink,  
County Councilmember  
Montgomery County, Maryland  
District 5

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<sup>1</sup> “Rent Regulations and the Montgomery County Rental Housing Market,” Office of Legislative Oversight, 2023, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Heskin, Allan D., Ned Levine, and Mark Garrett. 2007. “The Effects of Vacancy Control: A Spatial Analysis of Four California Cities.” *Journal of the American Planning Association* 66 (2): 162–76.

<sup>3</sup> Christina Plerhoples Stacy, et. al., “Rent Control: Key Policy Components and Their Equity Implications,” Urban Institute. July 2021.

<https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/104630/rent-control-key-policy-components-and-their-equityimplications.pdf>

March 2025

Dear Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee,

As local electeds, we write to ask that you reject any amendments to Good Cause Eviction Local Enabling (SB 651/HB 709) that would create a local preemption. Counties and municipalities need the opportunity to have these conversations with constituents in the context of our local housing regulations and markets. Rushed, broad-strokes preemptions will stand in the way of good governance and strong policy.

We also specifically wish to highlight our strong opposition to any legislation that would preempt local authority to maintain or adopt vacancy control.

**Vacancy control is a fundamental tool for maintaining affordable housing stock and increasing housing stability.**

- Significant research confirms that vacancy control reduces rents compared to areas with rent regulations that lack vacancy control.<sup>1</sup>
- Rent regulated jurisdictions with vacancy controls have lower tenant turnover than those without.<sup>2</sup>
- “Studies have shown that cities with vacancy control...experienced an increase in their share of Black and Latinx renters and were generally more affordable to low-income households. **Conversely, jurisdictions with vacancy decontrol were less affordable and disproportionately displaced Black renters.**”<sup>3</sup>

**Removing vacancy control from rent stabilized jurisdictions would directly undermine the central purpose of rent stabilization (maintaining affordable housing stock), cause major disruptions to the affordable housing market in places with longstanding rent regulations, and incentivize evictions – yes, even with Good Cause protections.**

- Returning units to market rate during vacancies eliminates the ability to maintain stability in the affordable housing market. After California mandated vacancy decontrol, a study of Berkeley found that “[since vacancy control was lifted], **85% of all rent-stabilized apartments in the city had turned over at least once and rents increased to the higher levels typical of the Bay Area’s unrestricted market.**”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “[Rent Regulations and the Montgomery County Rental Housing Market](#),” Office of Legislative Oversight, 2023, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Heskin, Allan D., Ned Levine, and Mark Garrett. 2007. “The Effects of Vacancy Control: A Spatial Analysis of Four California Cities.” *Journal of the American Planning Association* 66 (2): 162–76.

<sup>3</sup> Christina Plerhoples Stacy, et. al., “Rent Control: Key Policy Components and Their Equity Implications,” Urban Institute. July 2021.

<https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/104630/rent-control-key-policy-components-and-their-equityimplications.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Edward G. Goetz, Anthony Damiano, Peter Hendee Brown, Patrick Alcorn, Jeff Matson, Minneapolis Rent Stabilization Study, University of Minnesota Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (2021).

- Vacancy decontrol creates an incentive for owners to evict current tenants – or, if covered by Good Cause, to find a legally passable loophole to do so, such as temporarily removing the property from the rental market, or driving tenants out through poor property management. This incentive would be heightened in places with longstanding rent controls, such as Takoma Park.

**Meanwhile, exempting vacancy controlled units from Good Cause or other tenant protections would deny access to tens of thousands of our most vulnerable families.**

- In Montgomery County, for example, over 57,000 units are currently rent regulated, and thus vacancy controlled. Disproportionately, complaints about retaliatory Tenant Holding Over evictions come from these older buildings which are now regulated.

**Research consistently shows that rent stabilization laws, including ones with vacancy control, do not stymie development.**

- The “supply-reduction claim alleging rent control’s negative effect on new housing development is supported by little evidence. Virtually all existing rent regulations, including the new statewide laws, exempt new construction. Indeed, empirical studies in [New Jersey](#) and [Washington, DC](#), found no relationship between rent control and new housing development.
- “Some [experts theorize](#) that rent control negatively affects new housing construction because it could lower the rent of a neighborhood and, in turn, lower developers’ incentives to build there. But even when rent control suppresses rent and property values, it has a [negligible effect on new construction](#). This is likely because housing construction responds more to broader macroeconomic factors.”<sup>5</sup>
- “[E]xternal economic cycles and local housing market landscapes are more clearly tied to housing production and market-rate supply trends than is rent control”<sup>6</sup>
- “On balance, rent regulations do not impact new housing construction. On balance, new housing supply is more influenced by cyclicity in the local economy and other local conditions than rent restrictions.”<sup>7</sup>

Increasing housing supply and protecting existing affordable housing are *both* essential components of effective housing policy. Policies for both goals can and do coexist in our jurisdictions. **We ask that as you consider and hopefully pass legislation opening up access to more housing stability tools like Good Cause, you continue to leave implementation decisions, as well as vacancy control, to be discussed locally.**

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<sup>5</sup> Rajasekaran, Prasanna. “[Will New Statewide Rent Control Laws Decrease Housing Supply?](#)”, Urban Institute (2019).

<sup>6</sup> Christina Plerhoples Stacy, Eleanor Noble, Jorge Morales-Burnett, Timothy Hodge, Timothy Komarek, [Rent Control: Key Policy Components and Their Equity Implications](#), Urban Institute (2021).

<sup>7</sup> Goetz, et al., at p. 3; Manuel Pastor, Vanessa Carter, Maya Abood, [Rent Matters: What are the Impacts of Rent Stabilization Measures?](#), USC Dornsife Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, at p. 4, 9 (2018).

Respectfully,

Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich  
Montgomery County Councilmember Kristin Mink (District 5)  
Montgomery County Council Vice President Will Jawando (At-Large)  
Montgomery County Councilmember Natali Fani-Gonzalez (District 6)  
Montgomery County Council President Kate Stewart (District 4)  
Montgomery County Councilmember Laurie-Anne Sayles (At-Large)  
Montgomery County Councilmember Sidney Katz (District 3)  
Prince George's County Councilmember Krystal Oriadha (District 7)  
Prince George's County Council Vice Chair Edward Burroughs III (District 8)  
Prince George's County Councilmember Tom Dernoga (District 1)  
Prince George's County Councilmember Wala Blegay (District 6)  
Prince George's County Councilmember Eric Olson (District 3)  
Prince George's County Councilmember Wanika Fisher (District 2)  
Prince George's County Council Democratic Nominee Shayla Adams-Stafford (District 5)  
Anne Arundel County Executive Steuart Pittman  
Baltimore City Mayor Brandon Scott  
Baltimore City Comptroller Bill Henry  
Baltimore City Council President Zeke Cohen  
Baltimore City Councilmember Odette Ramos (District 14)  
Baltimore City Councilmember Paris Gray (District 8)  
Baltimore City Councilmember Zac Blanchard (District 11)  
Baltimore City Councilmember Mark Conway (District 4)  
Baltimore City Councilmember Phylicia Porter (District 10)  
Baltimore City Councilmember Jermaine Jones (District 12)  
Baltimore City Councilmember Antonio Glover (District 13)  
Baltimore City Councilmember Ryan Dorsey (District 3)  
Baltimore City Councilmember Mark Parker (District 1)  
Baltimore County Councilmember Patrick Young (District 1)  
Howard County Council Chair Liz Walsh (District 1)  
Frederick County Council Vice President Kavonte Duckett (District 4)  
Mayor Celina Benitez, City of Mount Rainier  
Mayor Talisha Searcy, City of Takoma Park  
Mayor Monica Casañas, Town of Colmar Manor  
Mayor Cashenna A. Cross, City of Glenarden  
Mayor Kelly Porter, City of Seat Pleasant  
City of Seat Pleasant Council Vice President Shireka McCarthy (At-Large)  
City of Takoma Park Councilmember Cindy Dyballa (Ward 2)  
City of Takoma Park Councilmember Jessica Landman (Ward 1)  
City of Takoma Park Councilmember Cara Honzak (Ward 5)  
City of Takoma Park Councilmember Roger Schlegel (Ward 3)  
City of Rockville Councilmember Izola Shaw

City of Rockville Councilmember David Myles  
City of Hyattsville Councilmember Rommel Sandino  
City of Hyattsville Councilmember Danny Schaible  
City of Greenbelt Councilmember Jenni Pompei  
City of Laurel Council President Pro-Tem Jeffrey W. Mills (Ward 2)  
City of New Carrollton Council Chair Briana Urbina  
District Heights Commissioner Anthony Tilghman