



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

KATE STEWART
COUNCILMEMBER
MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

February 26, 2026

TO: The Honorable Kriselda Valderrama
Chair, Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Kate Stewart
Montgomery County Councilmember, District 4

RE: House Bill 774, *Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)*
Support

My name is Kate Stewart and I serve as the Montgomery County Councilmember for District 4. Today, I am writing on behalf of myself in support of House Bill 774, *Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)*.

This bill would authorize a county to adopt local provisions that would prohibit a landlord of residential properties from failing to renew a lease without good cause. The Montgomery County Council has expressed their support for “good cause” legislation with its inclusion in our state priorities letter for the 2026 General Assembly Session.

Growing up the child of a single parent and renter, I know first hand the disruptive nature of having to move often. Prior to serving on the Montgomery County Council, renters’ rights and housing affordability are issues I have worked on as Mayor of the City of Takoma Park. I have worked on many policies to create housing stability, and this legislation is a cornerstone of ensuring people have access to safe, predictable housing that allows them to plan for their lives and the future, which in turn creates stable, thriving communities. Currently, landlords can remove a tenant from their home with just 60 days notice and no reason provided. This allows

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landlords to evict tenants for the purpose of potentially raising the rent or to avoid making necessary repairs, and the fear of retaliatory eviction often prevents tenants from requesting needed maintenance. HB 774 would require landlords to provide a “good cause” – established by local law or ordinance – to justify the nonrenewal of a lease or the termination of a holdover tenancy. Examples of good causes as enumerated in the bill include a tenant committing a substantial breach of lease or causing substantial damage to the leased premises, engaging in illegal activity on the premises, refusing to grant the landlord access for the purpose of repairs or improvements; or if the landlord, in good faith, seeks to remove the leased premises from the rental market.

As we consider countywide policies to help keep tenants in their homes, good cause eviction is an important step to promoting equity in the community and protecting people who are vulnerable from being displaced. I urge this committee to vote favorably on House Bill 774. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter, and please don’t hesitate to contact my office if you have further questions.