

HB0774_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
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TESTIMONY ON HB#0774 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)

TO: Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian, and members of the Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of/ HB#/0774, Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)

This bill empowers Maryland counties to enforce the laws already in place governing evictions to prevent an eviction in violation of currently permitted reasons for that action.

My Jewish faith has ancient Jewish texts that are full of laws about keeping homes safe for the people who live in them. The prophet Micah (Micah 2:1-3) understood that housing is more than a roof over one's head and that to deny a person safe housing is not only robbing them in the present but also robbing their family for generations to come.

Nobody should lose their home because of the whims of their landlord, yet many renters in Maryland are evicted or have their leases non-renewed without any reason. Landlords often evict tenants who organize for their rights or complain about violations of laws about safe housing conditions.

“Just cause” or “good cause” laws protect tenants from this kind of retaliation, and from being evicted for no reason at all. These laws strengthen other renter protections by ensuring that tenants can hold their landlords accountable without fear of losing their homes. This bill would allow counties across Maryland to adopt their own “good cause” laws that meet local needs.

The Maryland Access to Justice Commission has declared *The Case for Good Cause Eviction Protections in Maryland*¹

At its core, Good Cause Eviction laws prohibit landlords from evicting tenants or refusing to renew leases without a valid, legally recognized reason.

The bill will accomplish these outcomes by authorizing a county to adopt, by local law or ordinance, provisions prohibiting certain landlords of residential property from failing to renew a lease during the lease period or from terminating a holdover tenancy without good cause; establishing certain requirements and prohibitions for a local law or ordinance adopted in accordance with the Act; etc.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB0774.

¹ <https://www.mdaccesstojustice.org/news-insights/the-case-for-good-cause-eviction-protections-in-maryland/>