



Chairperson Delegate Valdarama and members of the House of Delegates Economic Matters Committee:

I am writing testimony to express my position: SUPPORT (FAV) HR-774 Landlord and Tenant-Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies-Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)

My name is Ray Nosbaum, and I am a member of the Long Branch Housing Action Team (LBHAT), active since mid 2023 to support the goals in Long Branch of affordable housing and prevention of increasing costs of housing. The members of the team include a diversity of age, gender, race, ethnic background and languages. The LBHAT is committed to a clean Good Cause Eviction bill. The LBHAT is a member of the Renters United MD (RUM) coalition

In May 2025, the LBHAT organized a community event with the MD District 20 elected officials, including Delegate Lorig Charkourdian. Delegate Charkourdian, now the Vice Chairperson for the Economic Matters Committee, spoke eloquently expressing her support for a clean Good Cause Eviction bill. The LBHAT hopes that other members of the Economic Matters Committee will also support and vote for a clean bill

Related to Good Cause Eviction, I would like share a specific story which impacts a member of my family who rents in Long Branch and was threatened with breach of contract by overstaying a holdover lease. It is my belief and the belief of my family member that the landlord was retaliating because my family member complained about housing code violations in an apartment building already on Montgomery County's 'Troubled Properties' list. Additionally, after door knocking with tenant organizers, it was discovered that the landlord had raised rents, illegally, in 8 apartments and had charged illegal fees for all 50 apartments. The County required the landlord to credit residents. For these reasons, my family member and I believe the landlord retaliated. In his decision, the judge agreed the landlord retaliated. However, at the end of the trial before he made his decision, the judge said to my family member's lawyer, 'You know that even if I make a favorable decision for your client, it protects her for only 6 months.' Now, the landlord can again file against my family member for overstaying the lease. My family member can NOT appeal based on MD Real Property 8-206

At the Long Branch meeting in May 2025 with the MD District 20 elected officials, Long Branch community leaders shared the results of a survey where approximately 82% of respondents expressed fear about complaining about housing code violations or communicating with other tenants because they felt landlords would retaliate with intimidating behavior including threats of eviction

Any eviction, especially those without good cause, cause substantial harm to individuals, families and the communities at large, because evictions:



- Displace people which costs them money which they either do NOT have or would spend in the community,
- Disrupts employment and education endeavors,
- Adds to 'trauma' experienced by many people of color or low income. It is starting to be documented that the physical and mental health of African Americans and migrants is negatively impacted by these continuing experiences of trauma. The costs of these traumas are personal and social
- Make visible the imbalance of power in the hands of landlords in courts to evict and enforce their actions which negatively impact a substantial number of families of low income and color. Many tenants do not go to court to defend their interests because of fear, lack of money, lack of easy access to legal support, and other challenges

In Long Branch, many landlords and developers have obtained property because Long Branch is in the Purple Line corridor. The Purple Line is a transit-oriented development, and research demonstrates that infrastructure development like transit-oriented development leads to gentrification and displacement. Landlords and developers can either sell or redevelop for profit at the cost of current residents. Currently, landlords can evict tenants, without good reason, for new construction, redevelopment or sale to another developer. This is another important reason why we need Good Cause Eviction to make it harder for these landlords to displace residents without providing a good reason just to be able to build less affordable housing displacing current residents

Finally, last year's Good Cause Eviction ran into a proposal by some Senators to include requiring jurisdictions to choose between Good Cause Eviction and Vacancy Control. A couple of the main reasons which I heard are:

- Montgomery Council members included Vacancy Control in their Rent Stabilization law because they could NOT enact Good Cause Eviction, and
- Combining Vacancy Control and Good Cause Eviction would 'kill' housing construction which is also needed to achieve affordable housing

First, I watched the Montgomery County Council debate on rent stabilization. Members of the House of Delegates Economic Matters Committee are encouraged to watch the recorded debate. While the first bullet is partially true. The main reason for Vacancy Control is to keep apartments affordable by keeping increases capped at 10% or 10% plus a 'banked' amount. This helps keep housing in a community, like Long Branch, affordable

Finally, so much of the 'research' cited to argue against the combination of Vacancy Control and Good Cause Eviction is done or funded by developers and the real estate industry. I encourage Senators to look at more academic research, such as research done by the University of Maryland, Center for Smart Growth

For these reasons, I urge a favorable vote on HR774