

HB0080_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

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Richard Keith Kaplowitz

Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON HB#/0080- POSITION: FAVORABLE

Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases - Fee Disclosures

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

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/0080, **Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases - Fee Disclosures**

There is a known problem with junk fees on residential leases. As reported by realtor.com *Rent Isn't What It Seems: The Hidden Fees Driving Up Housing Costs and the States Taking Action*¹

...when it comes to [renting](#), many tenants sign a short lease agreement without any indication of the true price of living there.

Across the country, renters are reporting a surge of “junk fees”—from mandatory trash collection and pest control to surprise administrative costs—that push monthly bills beyond the advertised rent. For families already struggling with affordability, those hidden charges can be the breaking point.

Lawmakers have taken notice. At least 19 states have passed laws banning or restricting hidden rental fees, with more than 30 measures adopted nationwide since 2025, according to the [National Low Income Housing Coalition](#). While the details [differ by state](#), the goal is the same: to bring transparency and fairness to a rental market where the real cost has too often been kept in the fine print.

This is a consumer protection bill for Marylanders that will address this issue. The bill will require a landlord to provide certain information to prospective tenants about fees imposed on tenants and prohibiting a landlord from imposing a mandatory fee that was not disclosed; applying the Act to a lease signed or renewed on or after October 1, 2026, and a landlord that offers four or more dwelling units for rent; and authorizing a tenant to file a claim against a landlord for a violation of the Act on or after February 1, 2027, and during the tenancy or up to 2 years after the tenancy expired.

It is time for Maryland to address problems that affect both housing affordability and availability.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/0080.

¹ <https://www.realtor.com/advice/rent/hidden-rental-fees-state-laws/>