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Economic Matters Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
230 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support for HB 774 – Landlord and Tenant – Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies – Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)

Dear Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian and Honorable Committee Members:

We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership (BRHP). I am writing to express our support for HB 709, a critical step towards protecting tenants from arbitrary lease terminations and promoting housing stability in our communities by enabling local jurisdictions to enact good cause ordinances that protect tenants and best fit their community needs.

BRHP is a non-profit organization that expands housing choices for families with low incomes who have historically been excluded from housing in well-resourced neighborhoods, helping them to access and transition successfully to safe, healthy, and economically vibrant communities. As the Regional Administrator for the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program, BRHP has opened pathways to a better future for low-income families for over 10 years. BRHP currently provides over 4,300 low-income families rental assistance in the form of the Housing Choice Voucher and couples that with counseling support for families as they move from areas of concentrated poverty to areas of opportunity in Baltimore City and the five surrounding counties.

Whether homeowner or renter – across race, class, and zip code – all Marylanders deserve the chance to put down roots in our communities. Yet, in FY 2025, landlords filed 4,462 “no cause” or “tenant holding over” eviction cases – a 42% increase since 2019. HB 774 would allow local jurisdictions to pass Good Cause Eviction laws and prevent families from being evicted without a legitimate reason. **We urge the Committee to pass a clean HB 774 and reject amendments that force a false choice between strong rent stabilization and good cause eviction protections. Maryland families need both stable rents and stable homes.**

Evictions disproportionately affect Black renters and families with young children. According to research published by the [Princeton University Eviction Lab](#), over half of eviction filings are against Black renters. **More than one in four Black children under five years old in a rental unit faces eviction each year, and [up to 25% of households who are evicted become homeless.](#)**

For BRHP participants, Good Cause Eviction protections are especially important. Families in the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program work hard, often overcoming significant barriers, to secure stable housing in opportunity-rich neighborhoods. When these families face the threat of no-cause eviction, the progress they have made toward educational success, job stability, and improved health is at risk. HB 774 supports BRHP participants and other marginalized families by ensuring they cannot be uprooted without a legitimate reason, allowing them to remain connected to schools, employers, health providers, and community networks that are essential to long-term economic mobility.

HB 774 is local enabling legislation only. It simply gives counties the authority to adopt Good Cause Eviction laws and integrate them with other local housing policies. The bill exempts landlords who own five or fewer rental units, ensuring that the policy focuses on large corporate landlords whose practices drive most no-cause evictions. **Maryland is only one of 5 states that explicitly prohibits counties from passing good cause eviction.**

Eviction is a traumatic event that disrupts families' lives, education, and emotional well-being. By helping to prevent unnecessary evictions, HB 774 is a step towards creating a more equitable and predictable housing market where tenants can live without the fear of arbitrary and destabilizing displacement. Good Cause Eviction is a no-cost tool that helps counties prevent homelessness, especially at a time when federal supports are diminishing. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee for a favorable report on HB 774.

Sincerely,

Adria Crutchfield
Executive Director