

HB 774 –Landlord and Tenant Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)

Hearing before the Economic Matters Committee, February 26, 2026

Position: FAVORABLE

Disability Rights Maryland (DRM) is the federally designated Protection & Advocacy agency in Maryland mandated to advance the civil rights of people with disabilities. One of DRM’s goals is to end the unnecessary segregation and institutionalization of Marylanders with disabilities. To achieve this goal, DRM’s Housing team works to expand opportunities for Marylanders with disabilities to be part of their communities and to maintain affordable and accessible housing. This includes representing people with disabilities in eviction proceedings to prevent unnecessary homelessness and institutionalization.

DRM is part of Renters United Maryland and urges the House Economic Matters Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 774.

Whether homeowner or renter – across race, class, disability and zip code – all Marylanders deserve the chance to put down roots in our communities. Yet, in FY 2025, landlords filed nearly 5,000 “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 unless a corporate landlord provides a legitimate reason. **We urge the Committee to pass a clean HB 774 and reject amendments.**

HB 774 is targeted at large corporate landlords. The bill explicitly exempts landlords who own 5 or fewer rental units in Maryland. Currently in Maryland, corporate landlords can choose not to renew a tenant’s lease for *no good reason* and as a result many Marylanders are facing severe housing instability. In our state, 5,000+ families are made homeless each year because of an eviction. See Alliance to End Homelessness: [MD-fact-sheet-2024-PIT-Data.pdf](#), and more than 30,000 Marylanders experience homelessness each year. [Homelessness in Maryland | Health Care for the Homeless - Baltimore and Maryland](#). There is a dire need to reduce evictions and keep Marylanders rooted in our communities.

HB 774 would allow local jurisdictions the ability to pass good cause laws which simply require transparency and accountability from corporate landlords for why they are choosing not to renew a lease and evicting a tenant. This is local enabling legislation – not a state mandate – so that local jurisdictions may pass good cause within the framework of their housing needs and master plan. Maryland is one of only five states that explicitly prohibits counties from passing Good Cause Eviction laws.

[Up to 25% of households who are evicted become homeless.](#) Good Cause Eviction is a no-cost way for Maryland to prevent more families from becoming homeless at a time when the federal government is shredding the social safety net.

People with disabilities are especially affected by the lack of Good Cause legislation. People with intellectual or developmental disabilities have difficulty understanding and negotiating

systems, including locating and applying for housing and figuring out how to access security deposit assistance. If a tenant has a housing choice voucher, they must request a move voucher from the public housing authority (PHA), find a new residence willing to accept the voucher with monthly rent that is within the HUD payment standard. They must negotiate the required move out date of the current unit with the PHA's approval of a new unit, including the inspection. There is often a disconnect between these timelines.

Requiring people to move without good cause is disruptive for many reasons:

Moving is expensive!

Moving is difficult and stressful even for those who have financial resources and are healthy.

Moving may require children to change schools and parents to change jobs.

Moving causes instability and potentially homelessness which creates additional strain on state and local resources.

Moving is especially difficult for people with mobility disabilities. Due to the substantial lack of accessible units in Maryland, if a person with a mobility disability managed to find and is living in an accessible unit, to have the lease not renewed is an incredible hardship.

The National Center for Smart Growth in 2025 prepared a Housing Gap Analysis for Maryland. The data shows that statewide there are 686,244 people with disabilities 49% of whom have an "ambulatory" disability. [Report #2 v0627 SHNA 2025](#), see p. 31 (e-page 33). Moreover, there are only 5,306 accessible units for low-income families with a person with a mobility disability. *Id.* at p.41 (e-page 43).(Table 15). I encourage you to view the Housing Gap Analysis which contains an extensive amount of data and is a tremendous resource.

For these reasons, DRM urges a favorable report on HB 774.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me with any questions regarding my testimony.

Sincerely,

/s/ Leslie Dickinson

Leslie Dickinson

Managing Attorney

Disability Rights Maryland

(443) 692-2488

LeslieD@Disabilityrightsmd.org