

Long Branch Housing Action Team (LBHAT)
HB 774 - Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)

Hearing before the House Economic Matters Committee, February 26, 2026

Position: SUPPORT (FAV)

Long Branch Housing Action Team (LBHAT) is part of Renters United Maryland and urges the House Economic Matters Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 774.

(English translation below)

Me llamo Lucrecia y vivo en Long Branch. Llevo 10 años viviendo en mi apartamento con mi marido y mi hija. He tenido muchos problemas que requieren mantenimiento, pero no los denunciemos por miedo a que el dueño nos desaloje o nos suba la renta. Esto le ha pasado a otro inquilino del edificio. ¡No queremos que nos desalojen por quejarnos! Y no podemos pagar más renta. En cualquier caso, según mi experiencia, es casi imposible presentar quejas y no resultan en soluciones.

Un ejemplo que persiste en mi apartamento es la entrada de agua arriba de la puerta del baño cuando llueve y también cuando derrite la nieve. O quizás viene del apartamento de arriba, pero nadie lo ha investigado. Resulta en moho que yo personalmente trato de limpiar, lo cual me enferma siempre. Cuando por fin los de mantenimiento llegaron a “reparar” la situación, solo vino a pintar levemente encima del moho y se fue. No se quitó el moho, solo lo cubrió, y volvió a aparecer. Ya no les llamo porque sería lo mismo. Una vez, estaba goteando en la sala hasta que se cayó un pedazo del ceiling y mi esposo lo reparó con una pieza de madera.

Tantos problemas sin solución, pero no nos quejamos por temor a que no nos desalojen o suban la renta. Solo un vecino se atrevió llamar al condado porque también tenía fuga de agua y moho, y estaba preocupado por la salud de su niño pequeño. El condado vino a inspeccionar el apartamento, y después, el dueño subió la renta del vecino como consecuencia. Así que nos damos cuenta que si uno se queja, aumentan la renta. Mientras, no nos ayudan con ningún mantenimiento.

No queremos mudarnos porque sabemos que lo mismo pasa en otros edificios y como nuestra hija está todavía estudiando en las escuelas cercanas, no hay beneficio en mudarnos.

Que opciones tenemos para vivir en un hogar sin moho y con un mantenimiento adecuado, si tenemos temor de quejarnos de los problemas que vivimos?

Les solicito que apoyen la propuesta de ley HB 774, a favor del desalojo por causa justificada.

My name is Lucrecia and I live in Long Branch. I've been living in my apartment with my husband and daughter for 10 years. I've experienced many problems requiring maintenance, but we don't report them because we are afraid our landlord will evict us or raise our rent. This has happened to another renter in our building. We don't want to be evicted for complaining! And we can't afford an increase. In any case, in my experience, complaints are almost impossible to make - and they don't lead to solutions.

When we have called the landlords, they don't answer. And they're only in the office one day a week, on Fridays, during the hours we're always at work. So there's no way to report the problems.

One persistent problem in my apartment is the water leaking above the bathroom door when it rains and also when the snow melts. Or maybe it's coming from the apartment upstairs, but no one has investigated it. This results in mold, which I personally try to clean, and it always makes me sick. When the maintenance people finally came to "repair" the situation, they just lightly painted over the mold and left. They didn't remove the mold, they just covered it up, and it came back. I don't call them anymore because it would be the same. Once, there was a leak in the living room until a piece of the ceiling fell down, and my husband repaired it with a piece of wood.

So many problems without solutions, but we don't complain for fear of being evicted or having our rent increased. Only one neighbor dared to call the county because he also had a water leak and mold, and he was worried about his young child's health. The county came to inspect the apartment, and afterward, the landlord raised the neighbor's rent as a consequence. So we realize that if you complain, they raise the rent. Meanwhile, they don't help us with any maintenance.

We don't want to move because we know the same thing happens in other buildings, and since our daughter is still studying at the nearby schools, there's no benefit in moving.

What options do we have to live in a home without mold and with proper maintenance if we're afraid to complain about the problems we're experiencing?

I urge you to support House Bill 774, in favor of eviction for just cause.