

February 5, 2026

Hon. Kris Valderama
Chair, Economic Matters
130 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: HB 313 - Landlord and Tenant - Residential Housing - Rental Applications and Tenant Screening

Dear Chair Valderama,

I respectfully oppose this bill, which would expand source-of-income protections by prohibiting certain landlords from refusing to rent to prospective tenants who use income-based housing subsidies and by classifying violations as discriminatory housing practices subject to enforcement by the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights.

While preventing unlawful discrimination is an important goal, this bill raises significant concerns about its practical impact on housing providers. Participation in income-based subsidy programs often involves additional administrative requirements, inspection delays, and payment uncertainties that are beyond a landlord's control. Requiring participation under threat of civil rights enforcement may discourage property owners from remaining in the rental market altogether, reducing the overall supply of rental housing.

Additionally, the bill's provisions allowing landlords to collect financial information "under certain circumstances" lack sufficient clarity, creating uncertainty and potential liability even for well-intentioned landlords attempting to comply.

Treating these disputes as discriminatory housing practices subject to enforcement by the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights may also lead to increased litigation rather than cooperative resolution.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to issue an unfavorable report on this bill.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to issue an unfavorable report on this bill.