

02/26/2026
Jonathan Levitas
Baltimore, MD 21230

TESTIMONY ON HB0774 - POSITION: (FAVORABLE)

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

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

FROM: Jonathan Levitas

My name is Jonathan Levitas. I am a resident of District 46. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB0774, (Good Cause Eviction).

I am a resident of Riverside, in Baltimore, Maryland, a member of Beth Am Congregation, the Riverside Neighborhood Association, and several mutual aid organizations, and a landlord. I write on my own behalf, and on behalf of my family.

I was born into a middle class family and financial stability has allowed me to live a life removed from housing precarity and predatory landlords. I have not always understood how lucky I am, but moving to Baltimore in 2010 opened my eyes. The thing about this city is you can live in an expensive neighborhood filled with beautiful homes and be only a few blocks removed from desperate poverty and houses that are literally falling down. The dichotomy between my life and these environments was impossible to ignore.

I moved here to study law, and now work for a social services provider. In the course of my work, I have seen how often housing precarity manifests, and how it influences other outcomes. In my private life, I have seen through the eyes of friends how landlords fail to remedy unacceptable living conditions, and how frequently the only real choice is to find another place to live.

Until recently, I did not know that our State law does not permit local governments to protect tenants against arbitrary evictions. It shocks me that this is the current situation and I cannot understand why remedial bills have failed to pass for almost a decade.

This bill would introduce some common sense protections against arbitrary and malicious evictions, which drastically limit the power of tenants to organize or otherwise protect their legitimate interests, giving power to unscrupulous landlords.. I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB0774.