



TESTIMONY
HOUSE BILL 774
House Economic Matters Committee
February 26, 2026
Position: FAVORABLE

Chair Valderrama and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

The Community Development Network of Maryland (CDN) is the voice for Maryland’s community development sector and serves nearly 200 member organizations. CDN—focuses on small affordable housing developers, housing counseling agencies and community-based non-profits across the state of Maryland. The mission of CDN is to promote, strengthen and advocate for the community development sector throughout Maryland’s urban, suburban and rural communities.

HB 774 would allow counties to pass laws extending this “good cause eviction” requirement to larger landlords (owning 6 or more units) in their respective jurisdictions. We support this bill. Good cause eviction provides clarity for renters and owners on why they may be facing an eviction and accountability for owners and managers to ensure that we are meeting a certain standard of practice.

Safe, stable, affordable housing is the foundation of a stable school environment for children, maintaining employment, and obtaining better health care outcomes for seniors and persons with disabilities. Because of federal funding restrictions, many rental homes already require property owners to state a good reason for any eviction and provide renters with at least 60 days to move before starting an eviction case. This is called “good cause eviction.” Approximately 222,000 homes in Maryland are already protected by “good cause eviction.”

By defining the legal grounds on which a landlord can evict tenants or refuse to renew a lease, Maryland can be a better state. Good causes for eviction commonly include failure to pay rent, property damage, disturbance or disorderly conduct, other lease violations, criminal activity in a unit, and intent on the part of the landlord to sell, repair, or move into the unit.

More needs to be done to address the need for homes in Maryland. We need streamlined zoning and permitting processes and relief from rising construction and insurance costs. We need additional financial supports to bring the rent down and make it more affordable to residents and senior citizens. But, we also need to keep residents in the homes they are

already renting whenever possible, and good cause eviction supports that kind of stability and transparency for residents.

Housing instability is associated with the state's highest cost challenges including health and education. In a 2025 study published in the American Journal of Epidemiology, "Eviction, inability to pay rent, and youth mental health: a fixed effects study," the authors explore the impacts of housing insecurity on the mental well-being of children. The results indicate that evictions and a household's inability to pay rent/mortgage are associated with poor mental health outcomes and sleep disturbance symptoms for children in those households. The stress resulting from difficulty in meeting basic needs affects every household member. Eviction displacing young people can sever their social bonds with peers and neighbors.

According to the MSDE Blueprint, Neighborhood Indicators of Poverty report in 2023, high eviction rates are associated with low performing schools in the State of Maryland. In March 2025, the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) published a report comparing permitting for new buildings in counties in states that had recently passed some version of good cause—California, Oregon, and New Hampshire—to nearby areas without good cause protections. They controlled for county-level GDP, population, unemployment, and per capita income. They concluded that good cause did not have an effect on permitting, a close proxy for new construction.

Local governments should have the right to decide on these laws for themselves. In every area of the law, we hear that local authorities should be able to govern without being subjected to overreach. This should apply to Good Cause laws as well.

We urge a favorable report for House Bill 774.

Submitted by Claudia Wilson Randall, Executive Director, Community Development Network