



HB 59
Real Property – Expedited Wrongly Detainer Proceedings –
Property for Sale or Lease
House Economic Matters Committee
House Judiciary Committee
February 5, 2026

UNFAVORABLE

Voting Member Agencies:

Anne Arundel County Food Bank
Baltimore Jewish Council
CASH Campaign of Maryland
Catholic Charities
Family League of Baltimore
Laurel Advocacy & Referral Services, Inc.
Maryland Center on Economic Policy
Maryland Family Network
Maryland Food Bank
Maryland Hunger Solutions
Poverty Free Maryland

In 2025, SB 46 expedited “wrongful detainer” cases, requiring courts to hear any wrongful detainer claim within 10 days. **HB 59** could expedite the process even further, potentially giving tenants only a day or two to respond. It proposes changes to Maryland’s wrongful detainer procedures in cases involving property that is listed for sale or lease by the complainant at the time the complaint is filed. Under the bill, if a property owner or landlord initiates a wrongful detainer action and the property is advertised for sale or lease, the court must expedite hearings and appeals. Specifically, the District Court or circuit court would be required to issue a warrant of possession within 24 hours if the court rules in favor of the complainant in such expedited proceedings. The bill also clarifies how notice of hearings and appeals must be served, emphasizing personal delivery or conspicuous posting in defined circumstances.

Poverty Free Maryland envisions a Maryland without poverty, and a future where all Marylanders have the support and economic stability that’s needed to thrive.

The real crisis in Maryland is not “squatting,” but a shortage of 275,000 affordable rental units and the lack of basic tenant protections like good cause eviction.^{vi} Maryland policymakers should focus on solutions that stabilize families: strengthening fair housing laws, expanding eviction prevention funds, supporting good cause eviction, and creating zoning and administrative policies that spur housing production.

Poverty Free Maryland respectfully requests an unfavorable report on HB 59.

*Founded in 2025 through the merger of Welfare Advocates (established in 1979) and Marylanders Against Poverty (established in 1988), **Poverty Free Maryland** is a coalition of service providers, faith groups, and other organizations working together to exchange information, educate decisionmakers, and advocate for statewide public policies and programs necessary to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty and ensure that low-income Marylanders are provided with low- and no-barrier access to all resources needed to thrive and build a better life for the future.*

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