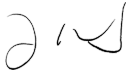


Robin Truiett-Theodorson
Chairwoman, Board of Commissioners
Janet Abrahams
President / Chief Executive Officer



February 5, 2026

TO: Members of the Economic Matters Committee
FROM: Janet Abrahams, HABC President & CEO 
RE: HB 313 – Landlord and Tenant – Residential Housing – Rental Applications and Tenant Screening
POSITION: Support

Chair Kriselda, Vice Chair Lorig, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee, please be advised that the Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) wishes to submit testimony on HB – 313 Landlord and Tenant – Residential Housing – Rental Application and Tenant Screening.

HB 313 prohibits a landlord from collecting an application fee unless the rental unit is available or will become available within 30 days of receiving the application; requiring a landlord to provide certain written disclosures before accepting an application or screening fee; prohibiting a landlord from taking certain adverse actions against a prospective tenant unless a landlord provides certain written notice to the prospective tenant; prohibiting a landlord from taking certain action relating to certain records.

The Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) is one of the country's largest public housing authorities (PHAs) and Baltimore City's largest provider of affordable housing opportunities. HABC serves over 46,000 low-income individuals in Baltimore City through its Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher (HCVP) programs. HABC's public housing inventory currently consists of approximately 6,000 units, and we provide rental assistance to nearly 22,000 households through our voucher program.

HABC serves some of Baltimore's most vulnerable residents, including those at risk of homelessness, seniors, people with disabilities, veterans, and families with children. These individuals already face significant barriers to securing stable housing. HABC does not charge or handle application fees for our programs, but we understand that arbitrary and excessive application fees only create more obstacles to housing for low- and extremely-low income households. Further, our HCVP participants sometimes must apply for housing several times before finding a unit to lease in the private market. This bill would help remove a financial burden for households with income that is already limited.

We respectfully request a favorable report for House Bill 313.