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Maryland Center on Economic Policy

Maryland Family Network

Maryland Food Bank

Maryland Hunger Solutions

Poverty Free Maryland

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HB 315

Human Relations – Discrimination in Housing – Income-Based Housing Subsidies

House Economic Matters Committee

February 5, 2026

FAVORABLE

House Bill 315 clarifies in Maryland law that landlords may not use income requirements, credit scores, or pre-voucher history as a pretense to deny housing to tenants who use housing vouchers.

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. We strongly support HB 315 because it closes a critical loophole that has allowed discrimination against families who use vouchers to persist despite the clear intent of Maryland law.

HB 315 completes the work of the HOME Act, which codified that landlords could not discriminate against tenants based on lawful sources of income, including housing vouchers. Many landlords have already adjusted to the HOME Act in good faith – and many will tell you that voucher holders are among their most reliable tenants, as rent payments are affordable for families and predictable for landlords. However, a small but noticeable number of landlords have responded by finding workarounds. Instead of rejecting voucher holders outright, they impose screen requirements that functionally do the same thing – income thresholds that ignore the subsidy or credit standards that penalize applicants for financial hardship that occurred before they ever received housing assistance.

More than 200,000 Marylanders rely on housing vouchers, including seniors, people with disabilities, and families with children. When housing vouchers function as intended, financial stability and economic mobility become more of a reality.

Poverty Free Maryland respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 315.

*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.*