

Hearing Date: February 26, 2026
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TESTIMONY ON HB0744 - POSITION: FAVORABLE

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

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

My name is Susan W. Tafler. I am a resident of District 21. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB0744, Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction).

Thank you to Delegate Wilkins for sponsoring HB 744, which is local enabling legislation to untie the hands of counties so that they can pass good cause eviction legislation if they want to and give residents the opportunity to stay rooted in their communities if they are abiding by the lease. If a Maryland county chooses to pass good cause, they will then integrate the new law into alignment with other local policies to meet local needs. I urge the Committee to pass a clean HB 744 and reject poison pill amendments that would force counties and renters to choose between having strong rent stabilization and good cause eviction protections; this is a false choice. We need stable rents and stable homes.

As a Jew guided by our sacred texts, I am mindful that our ancient Jewish texts are full of laws about keeping homes safe for the people who live in them. The prophet Micah understood that housing is more than a roof over one's head and that to deny a person safe housing is not only robbing them in the present but robbing their family for generations to come. Every person, regardless of race or income, should have a safe and stable home.

Eight other states--including Colorado and New York last year--have passed good cause eviction laws. Maryland is only one of five states that explicitly prohibits counties from passing good cause eviction. HB 744 is targeted at large corporate landlords and explicitly exempts landlords who own 5 or fewer rental units in Maryland. Good cause requires transparency and accountability from corporate landlords for why they are choosing to evict a tenant, and it protects tenants from retaliation for organizing for their rights or complaining about violations of laws about safe housing conditions. When corporate landlords engage in no-cause evictions, families cannot stay rooted in their schools, jobs, and support networks; and renters do not report hazardous conditions out of fear of eviction. The whole neighborhood suffers. **I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB 744.**