

# Tenant Rights SB 279 HB 1571

Good afternoon, ??, Vice Chair and EEE (education, energy environment) Committee Members, and Judiciary Committee Members

For the record my name is Robin Ross, I reside in Lothian, Md in one of the four mobile home parks – Patuxent Mobile Home Community sometime referred to as Patuxent Shores in Anne Arundel County

I am here representing myself – and other residents within the mobile home parks to urge you to vote for and in favor of HB1571 and SB0729 – Real Property – Access to Counsel in Evictions Programs – Mobile Home Parks

I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify before this committee on SB729 (and HB1571) on behalf of myself and other mobile home park residents and we strongly support this amended bill.

I also want to thank Senator Shaneka Henson and Delegate Marvin Holmes for bringing this bill before the Senate / House committees in our great state of Maryland, on behalf of their constituents.

I am going to share with you the situations that I myself and residents are subjected to by park owners and what we experience which also occurs within other similar communities. What is important to realize is that while we live in “mobile homes” – they are not as “mobile” as you might think or would believe. These large manufactured homes – are placed on pad and footers in privately owned communities that have gone for years as regulated as “mobile home parks.” To move one of these homes is often as expensive as it is to purchase a used one costing upward of and in many cases in excess of 20k.

Tenants in these parks – or communities either purchase outright a unit from a previous owner, or sign a lease to rent. At the same time, while they may own the unit they live in – they must rent the ground space (the dirt) from the park owners that the unit is placed on. Park owners not only charge for the pad space, but residents are required to pay fees for unrelated repairs and subjected to

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retaliatory evictions if payments were late -- ultimately impacting residents' economic ability to live in an affordable community. As land renters, we pay as much as \$812-\$1,500 or more in ground rent for their units with outrageous rent hikes in addition to high monthly costs for water/sewer service which for water is more times than not poor to undrinkable , and maintenance of community property – which does not materialize

Mobile home parks in Anne Arundel county and throughout the state are primarily privately-owned. Our research and all the research shows that the vast majority of these communities are owned by out of state investors whose goal is to increase their profitability. They commonly and routinely neglect the infrastructure in the community and residents needs as a general and common practice to move existing tenants out – and get in new ones to raise the rents.

Residents are typically only allowed a one-year unrenewable lease, which includes discriminatory illegal practices. Then they intentionally seek to push you to a month to month lease which they can terminate at any point for any reason. They speak of and claim park rules and standards that are not part of the written rules and more times than not, refuse to or do not provide the information to residents. Moreover, rules are not equally applied or enforced.

When we raise questions or voice concerns about rates or situations occurring in the park, we are further threatened with these false rule violations and eviction if we persist. Getting these unexpected and false notices of supposed rule violation comes with additional charges and without identifying the reasons or rules is highly stressful robbing residents of our peace and right to a quiet and enjoyable home.

You will not hear from the vast number of mobile home residents, for fear of retaliation – losing their homes – even if they own the unit. This is what happens. I myself was subjected to a 2 almost 3-year litigation with park owners over a

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false claim of holding over after I refused to be bullied that cost me 10k and many sleepless nights.

The court issued a verdict in my favor – I do not and will never fear speaking out against what is wrong and unjust, and make no mistake, I am sure that I will face nefarious and retaliatory actions again due to my being here today. However, most of the residents in these parks cannot afford to spend the time or money for legal fees and are afraid of what I have had to endure and or becoming homeless.

Maryland laws protecting landlord-tenant relationships do not address the issues or give rights to those residing in mobile home communities. We are grateful for Senator Henson, the Maryland legal lab and other tenant advocates to get this legislation drafted.

Please approve this legislation – HB1571 – (SB279) to help us remain in our affordable homes and have rights to object to conditions affecting us financially.

Robin R. Ross

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robin R. Ross". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

56 Patuxent Mobile Ests.

Lothian, MD, 20711

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