



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

March 25th, 2026

HB80

**Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases - Fee Disclosures
Judicial Proceedings Committee
Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of **House Bill 80**. The Maryland Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

The Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases - Fee Disclosures Act seeks to enhance transparency and fairness in the rental housing market by ensuring that landlords disclose all mandatory fees associated with a lease agreement. Under this bill, landlords would be prohibited from advertising misleading rental rates and required to provide full disclosure of fees to prospective tenants. Additionally, landlords would be prevented from imposing undisclosed mandatory fees, and the Department of Housing and Community Development would be empowered to assist tenants and impose penalties for violations of these regulations.

House Bill 80 is essential for protecting individuals and families from financial exploitation, particularly those already burdened by economic hardship. Clear fee disclosure promotes fairness, stability, and trust between landlords and tenants. Many residents, especially young renters, seniors, and low-income families—face financial strain due to hidden or last-minute fees that can make housing unaffordable. By requiring transparency upfront, this legislation helps tenants make informed decisions, prevents financial hardship, and encourages responsible housing practices across the state. Supporting this bill ensures that families are not blindsided by unexpected costs at a time when safe and affordable housing is already a pressing need for many Marylanders.

Additionally, it promotes trust and accountability in the rental market, preventing deceptive practices that can lead to housing instability, evictions, and financial distress. When individuals and families face unexpected financial burdens due to undisclosed fees, they are at greater risk of housing insecurity and homelessness, which negatively affects community well-being, social services, and economic stability.

Housing is a foundational human need, and transparency in rental agreements safeguards families, especially those living paycheck to paycheck—from unjust financial burdens. Ensuring fairness in rental practices reflects our commitment to justice and solidarity with those who are

most at risk of housing insecurity. This bill embodies the moral responsibility to create stable, equitable living conditions for all.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference urges a favorable report on **House Bill 80**.