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TESTIMONY ON SB0462 - POSITION: FAVORABLE

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

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
FROM: Mara Greengrass, on behalf of Jews United for Justice (JUFJ)

My name is Mara Greengrass. I'm a resident of District 18, a lifelong Marylander, a member of Congregation Beth El in Bethesda, and a neighbor who cares about the community. **I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Jews United for Justice (JUFJ) in support of SB 462, Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction).** JUFJ organizes over 6,000 Jews and allies from across Maryland in support of social, racial, and economic justice campaigns at the state and local levels.

Housing stability is a vital part of Jewish law and values. Our texts often assume people in need of assistance will already have stable housing because it's such a fundamental right; 12th century scholar Maimonides noted in the Mishneh Torah that landlords must give sufficient warning before terminating a lease, to ensure the tenants had time to find new housing.

This is why I believe landlords should have to provide a valid reason before evicting tenants, such as violation of the lease, destruction of property, non-payment of rent, or illegal activity. Landlords should *not* be able to evict tenants due to personal feelings or in retaliation for tenants complaining about rental conditions or forming a tenant union. Everyone I discuss this issue with considers Good Cause Eviction common-sense and entirely reasonable. Usually, they're surprised it's not *already* the law throughout Maryland. (My 16-year-old son was most indignant about it, in fact.)

In an uncertain world, it's our duty to keep tenants in their homes when possible. In tight budget times, we should remember that—as a society—it's much cheaper to keep tenants housed than it is to allow them to become homeless. This is yet another reason why the General Assembly must pass this legislation and reject any amendments that would force counties to choose between stable rents and stable homes. In 2025 alone, landlords filed nearly 5,000 eviction cases for hold over tenants. This legislation will help prevent these “no cause” eviction filings and keep people housed.

Everyone in Maryland deserves the peace of mind of knowing they can't be evicted unless their landlord provides a valid reason for not renewing their lease. Please support Good Cause Eviction enabling legislation and let each Maryland county decide for themselves if they want to implement it. **On behalf of JUFJ, I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB 462 and reject any weakening amendments that undermine existing renter protections.**