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SB729 - Real Property - Access to Counsel in Evictions Program and Mobile Home Parks

**Hearing before the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
March 5, 2026**

Position: FAVORABLE

To the Honorable Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

[Community Legal Services](#) (CLS) supports Senate Bill 729.

CLS provides free, high-quality legal services to protect the fundamental rights, ensure equal access to justice, and uplift the individuals, families, and communities we serve. The CLS Eviction Prevention Program assists low-income individuals and families facing eviction through the Access to Counsel in Evictions program. We provide representation for thousands of Maryland households annually.

CLS strongly supports Senate Bill 729 to ensure critical protections are in place to protect the rights of mobile home park residents. Without these protections, mobile home park residents are extremely vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

Mobile Home Park Residents Are the Most Vulnerable Tenants Under Maryland Law

“Mobile homes” is an older term for what is now more commonly referred to as manufactured housing. Almost all “mobile homes” are in fact permanent residences that cannot be moved without extremely costly expenses and the risk of critical damage to the home.

Whether these homes are rented or owned, they are on property owned by the mobile home park, and the residents must pay a fee to rent their lot area. Therefore, park residents who own their mobile homes are taking an extreme risk under current Maryland law. One late rental payment gives a park owner enough legal justification

to evict the residents from a mobile home.¹ In most cases, the residents are unable to move their home due to cost or risk of damage, and so the park gets to reclaim that home as abandoned property.

One missed payment, and a mobile home resident can lose not just their home but all the money and investments they have put into that home. And for the unscrupulous park owner, they can flip that home and do it all again to the next tenant.

The exploitation of mobile home residents in Maryland has only worsened as mobile home parks are increasingly bought up by hedge funds and other large institutional investors.² The affordable housing crisis in Maryland has worked to squeeze these residents through both increased demands for affordable homes as well as rapidly increasing lot rents, causing more and more residents to fall behind on the lot rent and eventually lose their homes as a result. These evictions fall most heavily on those who depend on the affordability of mobile home communities, such as veterans and retirees.

SB 729 Provides Urgently Needed Protections for Mobile Home Residents

Senate Bill 729 would significantly **enhance protections for “qualified residents” by requiring a “substantial violation” to deny lease renewals.** Thousands of mobile home residents would no longer have to fear the threat of eviction and the loss of their home for a single late rental payment.

In addition, in the cases where a resident is evicted, SB 729 would **require park owners to make a written offer to purchase the home based on the appraised value** by a qualified and disinterested appraiser. Residents would no longer have to fear losing all their housing investments upon eviction, and park owners would no longer be able to merely flip houses as abandoned property.

SB 729 also **aligns Maryland law for mobile home tenants with the protections afforded to all other tenants** in the state for notice periods before landlords can file eviction lawsuits or impose rent increases. Mobile home tenants would no longer be the forgotten class of tenancies that lack these protections.

Finally, SB 729 makes several minor changes to address common areas of exploitation for mobile home residents, including **prohibiting common excessive and unjustified fees and requiring certain policies and rules be provided to residents in writing.**

¹ See [Maryland Real Property § 8A-202\(c\)\(1\)\(i\)](#). One missed rental payment is sufficient to disqualify a resident from being a “qualified resident” who is entitled to a one-year lease renewal each year. For non-qualified residents, their lease can be changed to month-to-month at the expiration of the prior term. Once a resident is on a month-to-month lease, a park owner can end their lease upon 30-days’ notice. The residents would have no recourse to challenge the subsequent eviction as tenants holding over after the expiration of a lease term.

² See, e.g., [Cassie Powell, “Private equity firms are snapping up mobile home parks – and driving out the residents who can least afford to lose them.” *The Conversation* \(November 3, 2025\).](#)

Mobile homes have long been a vital affordable housing choice for low-income individuals and families, but Maryland law needs to keep up with the protections needed to ensure this choice is not in actuality a trap designed to exploit and defraud the low-income families and individuals who rely on it.

The Maryland General Assembly has the opportunity this year to protect these vulnerable tenants and their families by fixing the law for mobile home residents. Every year that this is not fixed, people are hurt. People are put out of their homes for no good reason, and since they are mobile home residents, they may lose their house and all the money they put into it as well.

For questions, please contact John Kowalko at johnkowalko@clspgc.org.

Community Legal Services urges a favorable report on SB 729.