

Chairperson Senator Smith and members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:

**I am writing testimony to express my position: SUPPORT (FAV) SB 462-Landlord and Tenant-Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies-Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)**

My name is Ray Nosbaum, and I am a member of the Long Branch Housing Action Team (LBHAT), active since mid 2023 to support the goals in Long Branch of affordable housing and prevention of increasing costs of housing. The members of the team include a diversity of age, gender, race, ethnic background and languages. The LBHAT is committed to a clean Good Cause Eviction bill. The LBHAT is a member of the Renters United MD (RUM) coalition

In 2025, the LBHAT organized community events with the MD District 20 elected officials and Senator Smith, himself. In May 2025, the community expressed disappointment that Good Cause Eviction did not pass in the 2025 MD General Assembly session and shared specific tenant experiences of landlord retaliation and intimidation. In August 2025, we combined a 'home' visit with a more intimate group of LBHAT and Long Branch community members. At that meeting, Senator Smith expressed a desire to work with Senator Muse to draft a bill that would include good causes for eviction as well as allowing counties with current vacancy control clauses to keep those laws AND adopt Good Cause Eviction laws

I would like share a specific story which impacts a member of my family who rents in Long Branch and was threatened with breach of contract by overstaying a holdover lease. It is my belief and the belief of my family member that the landlord was retaliating because my family member complained about housing code violations in an apartment building already on Montgomery County's 'Troubled Properties' list. Additionally, after door knocking with tenant organizers, it was discovered that the landlord had raised rents, illegally, in 8 apartments and had charged illegal fees for all 50 apartments. The County required the landlord to credit residents. For these reasons, my family member and I believe the landlord retaliated. In court, the judge agreed the landlord retaliated. However, my family member is protected for ONLY 6 months, after which the landlord can again file against my family member is overstaying the lease. My family member can NOT appeal based on MD Real Property 8-206

At the Long Branch meeting in May with the MD District 20 elected officials, community leaders shared the results of a survey where approximately 85% of respondents expressed fear about complaining about housing code violations feeling landlords would retaliate based on their intimidating behavior

If this is not enough of a reason to protect all tenants from other than good causes for eviction, require transparency by landlords, and allow tenants to protect themselves without time limitations - evictions cause substantial harm to individuals, families and the communities at large, because evictions:

- Displace people which costs them money they either to NOT have or would spend in the community,

- Disrupts employment and education endeavors,
- Adds to 'trauma' experienced by many people of color or low income. It is starting to be documented that the physical and mental health of African Americans and migrants is negatively impacted by these continuing experiences of trauma. If not personal losses, there is a cost to the whole community and nation
- The imbalance of power in the hands of landlords to enforce 'contract agreements' negatively impacts a substantial number of children in low income and households of color due this systemic and structural legal system

To express further the unfairness of the balance of power in favor of landlords with more resources than so many renters is that a landlord can terminate a lease of a renter who has met their contract obligations. Many tenants do not go to their court cases because of fear, lack of money, easy access to legal support, and many other resources which middle and upper class people take for granted

Many landlords, like landlords, especially corporate landlords are obtaining property in communities where the Purple Line, which is a transit oriented development, will arrive in 2027 (projected completion date), so they can either sell or redevelop at a profit at the cost of current residents. If these landlords can evict tenants for new construction, redevelopment or sale to a developer, we need Good Cause Eviction to make it harder for these landlord practices to displace residents, who are the ones governmental organizations claimed would benefit from the new transportation opportunities the Purple Line would provide

Finally, last year's Good Cause Eviction ran into a provision by some Senators to include requiring jurisdictions to choose between Good Cause Eviction and Vacancy Control. A couple of the main reasons which I heard are:

- Montgomery Council members included Vacancy Control because they could NOT enact Good Cause Eviction, and
- Combining Vacancy Control and Good Cause Eviction would 'kill' housing construction which is also needed to achieve affordable housing

First, I watched the Montgomery County Council debate on rent stabilization. MD Senators are encouraged to watch the recorded debate. While the first bullet is partially true. The main reason for Vacancy Control is to keep affordable apartments affordable by keeping increases capped at 10% or 10% plus a 'banked' amount

Finally, so much of the 'research' cited to argue against the combination of Vacancy Control and Good Cause Eviction is done or funded by developers and the real estate industry. I encourage Senators to look at more academic research, such as done by the University of Maryland, Center for Smart Growth

**For these reasons, I urge a favorable vote on SB 462**