



---

**SB 635 - Residential Real Property - Notice of Landlord Entry - Tenant Consent**  
**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**  
**Feb. 19, 2026, 1:00 PM**  
**Position: Favorable with Amendments**

The Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland (“PBRC”), an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is the statewide thought leader and clearinghouse for pro bono civil legal services in Maryland. As the designated pro bono arm of the MSBA, PBRC provides training, mentorship, and pro bono service opportunities to members of the private bar and offers direct legal services to over 5,000 clients annually.

In May 2017, with a grant from the Maryland Judiciary’s Access to Justice Department, PBRC launched the **Tenant Volunteer Lawyer of the Day (TVLD) Program, now called the Tenant Justice Program (TJP)**, in Baltimore City Rent Court to provide day-of-court legal representation to tenants appearing unrepresented for their proceedings. Since then, this continually expanding Program has allowed PBRC staff and volunteer attorneys to represent thousands of low-income tenants in both Baltimore City and Baltimore County in multiple types of legal actions that could result in eviction.

Last Session, the Maryland General Assembly passed a law adding Maryland to a list of 38 other jurisdictions that protect a tenant’s right to be free from unannounced intrusions by landlords in non-emergency situations. In last year’s negotiations, tenant advocates agreed to shorten the required notice period to 24 hours, to lengthen the window of time when a landlord may enter, and to modify emergency-exception language to arrive at legislation that protects tenants without interfering with landlords’ ability to make necessary repairs and manage their property. SB 635 as written would weaken the law by providing a landlord with an entire week’s period during which they are free to enter at will without notice should a tenant request repairs in writing.

**For especially vulnerable tenants, SB 635 as written sets up an impossible situation.** PBRC supported last year’s legislation in part due to our experience with single female tenants whose landlords would enter at times when the tenant was in a state of undress or otherwise compromised. Without a law mandating notice before entry, we had to advise those tenants that the landlord’s conduct was legal. Under SB 635 as currently written, those same tenants may be forced to reconsider whether they can or should request repairs in writing if it means they will lose any protection against the landlord entering at will. Should they choose not to request repairs in writing, they will likely find that any effort to enforce their Warranty of Habitability in court will fall short.

With amendments, SB 635 could present a fair compromise. It is rare that landlords need to begin repairs within 24 hours of a request in circumstances that are not already excepted from the law, as are repairs of an emergent. To prevent instances in which there may be confusion or miscommunication related to what constitutes and ongoing repair, PBRC would suggest amendments that allow for repeated entrance for ongoing repairs, but limit the time period of such repair to seven (7) days. Such amendments could create legislation that would be acceptable to landlords while still protecting tenants in their homes.

For the above reasons,  
**PBRC urges a FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS report on SB 635.**  
Please contact Katie Davis, Director of PBRC’s Courtroom Advocacy Project, with any questions.  
[kdavis@probonomd.org](mailto:kdavis@probonomd.org) • 443-703-3049