

Jessica A. Quincosa, Esq.  
Executive Director

Kayla Williams-Campbell, Esq.  
Deputy Director

Lisa Sarro, Esq.  
Director of Litigation &  
Advocacy



## HB 313 – Landlord and Tenant – Residential Housing – Rental Applications and Tenant Screening

Hearing Before the Judicial Proceedings Committee  
April 2, 2026

### Position: FAVORABLE

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To the Honorable Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

[Community Legal Services](#) (CLS) is a nonprofit legal services organization that provides free legal services to income-eligible Marylanders. CLS is a designated Access to Counsel in Evictions (ACE) provider, through which CLS has assisted thousands of tenants in Failure to Pay Rent (FTPR) rent and other housing matters. We work with many individuals and families every day for whom finding housing is an almost insurmountable challenge. **We urge a favorable report on HB 313 to help remove some of the barriers to accessing stable housing for the individuals and families we serve and all Marylanders.**

For many renters, applying for housing has become expensive, confusing, and unpredictable. Families pay multiple application fees without knowing what information landlords will rely on or whether that information is even accurate.

In our work, we routinely see tenants denied housing because of errors in screening reports - cases that were dismissed, old filings that never led to eviction, incorrect credit information, or even records that belong to someone else. Many applicants never receive a copy of the report and don't know they have the right to dispute mistakes. They lose the application fee, money they need for other expenses, and the opportunity for housing. HB 313 doesn't stop landlords from using screening reports. It simply ensures that renters know what's being considered and have access to the information used to judge them.

**HB 313 brings basic transparency and fairness to the tenant screening process.** Tenants deserve basic consumer protection and transparency in a process that determines whether they and their children will have a place to live. HB 313 is a practical step toward that goal.

We respectfully urge a favorable report. Please feel free to reach out to Lisa Marie Sarro, Esq., at [Sarro@clspgc.org](mailto:Sarro@clspgc.org) with any questions.