



100 North Charles Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

410-223-2222  
[www.brhp.org](http://www.brhp.org)

February 18, 2025

Environment and Transportation Committee  
Maryland House of Delegates  
250 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: Support for HB 709 – Landlord and Tenant – Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies – Local Good Cause Termination (Good Cause Eviction)**

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and Honorable Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee:

We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership (BRHP). I am writing to express our support for HB 709, a critical step towards protecting tenants from arbitrary lease terminations and promoting housing stability in our communities by enabling local jurisdictions to enact good cause ordinances that protect tenants and best fit their community needs.

BRHP is a non-profit organization that expands housing choices for families with low incomes who have historically been excluded from housing in well-resourced neighborhoods, helping them to access and transition successfully to safe, healthy, and economically vibrant communities. As the Regional Administrator for the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program, BRHP has opened pathways to a better future for low-income families for over 10 years. BRHP currently provides over 4,300 low-income families rental assistance in the form of the Housing Choice Voucher and couples that with counseling support for families as they move from areas of concentrated poverty to areas of opportunity in Baltimore City and the five surrounding counties. BRHP is dedicated to helping achieve racially and socially equitable public policy that ensures low-income families have access to quality and affordable homes in communities of their choice.

Maryland is one of only five states that explicitly prohibits counties from passing good cause eviction laws. In FY24, more than 5,000 Maryland families were evicted in “no cause” evictions where no reason is provided.

Evictions disproportionately affect Black renters and families with young children. According to research published by the [Princeton University Eviction Lab](https://princetonuniversityevictionlab.org/), over half of eviction filings are against Black renters, despite the fact that only 18.8% of renters in

America identify as Black. More than one in four Black children under five years old in a rental unit faces eviction each year. The increased risk of eviction for marginalized communities and children demonstrates that swift action should be taken to limit unnecessary evictions.

BRHP commends HB 709 for stipulating the requirement for good cause termination in a local law or ordinance, which we believe will help ensure that tenants are protected from displacement unless there is a legitimate reason, such as substantial lease breaches, illegal activities, or the landlord's need to recover the property for personal use. This transparency is crucial in helping tenants understand their rights and for preventing potential abuses of the eviction process. At the same time, by allowing local jurisdictions to tailor good cause eviction policies to their specific needs, HB 709 recognizes the diverse housing challenges across Maryland and promotes local solutions.

Eviction is not just a loss of housing—it is a traumatic event that disrupts families' lives, education, and emotional well-being. By helping to prevent unnecessary evictions, HB 709 is a step towards creating a more equitable and predictable housing market where tenants can live without the fear of arbitrary and destabilizing displacement. For these reasons, I respectfully urges the committee for a favorable report on HB 709.

Sincerely,

Adria Crutchfield  
Executive Director