

ROOTED IN MARYLAND

Support SB651 / HB709: Sen. Muse and Del. Wilkins



Good Cause Eviction Prevents Homelessness, Keeps Families Rooted, & Holds Corporate Landlords to Account!

Whether homeowner or renter – across race, class, and zip code – all Marylanders deserve the chance to put down roots in our communities. But for too long, large corporate landlords have rigged the rules to their benefit – filing eviction cases against **more than 5,000 Maryland families each year without providing a reason. Evictions make it impossible for many to stay in the homes and communities they love.**

Good Cause Eviction enabling legislation can change that. Allowing local jurisdictions to pass Good Cause Eviction laws would prevent people from being evicted unless the landlord provides a good reason.

As Maryland's budget deficit looms, passing enabling legislation for local Good Cause Eviction laws would save the state money on support programs and **provide a no-cost way to prevent homelessness, strengthen our communities, and hold corporate landlords to account.**

Keep Marylanders Rooted in Our Communities

When corporate landlords engage in no-cause evictions, families cannot stay rooted in their schools, jobs, and support networks; and, renters do not report hazardous conditions out of fear of eviction. The whole neighborhood suffers.

Good cause requires transparency and accountability from corporate landlords for why they are choosing to evict a tenant. It's that simple.

Without Good Cause Eviction laws, corporate landlords often non-renew leases as discrimination against families who have a housing voucher or by race, disability, or sexual orientation. Tenants can also face eviction as retaliation if they try to organize and demand repairs to dangerous living conditions.

Proving discrimination or retaliation is almost impossible, especially in district court where tenants do not have access to full court procedures like discovery.

Good Cause Works

Research from Princeton shows that **Good Cause Eviction laws in four California cities significantly decreased eviction filings** – and under Biden, the White House recognized the importance of Good Cause Eviction to stabilize families in their Renter Bill of Rights.

Eight states – California, Colorado, Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, and Washington – as well as D.C., have passed Good Cause Eviction legislation, as have over 23 localities. **Maryland is one of only five states that explicitly prohibits counties from passing Good Cause Eviction laws.**



No Reason, No Eviction!

Maryland Needs Good Cause Eviction because:

More than **30,000** Marylanders experience homelessness each year.

5,000+ Maryland families are made homeless each year because of an eviction.

In FY24, landlords filed **5,104** "no cause" eviction – known as "tenant holding over" cases.

This is a **62%** increase in the number of "no cause" eviction filings from pre-COVID.

1 in 4 Black children in renting households face the threat of eviction each year due to structural and systemic racism.

This is unacceptable and preventable!

Most Frequently Asked Questions

What other contracts require good cause to non-renew?

Labor agreements and insurance contracts often require good cause to terminate. Over 210,000 housing units in Maryland owned by corporate landlords – many for-profit – already require good cause to evict. This bill only extends that policy to other corporate landlords and says if Marylanders play by the rules, they should be able to stay rooted in their community.

What is the list of good causes for eviction that would be included in counties' good cause laws?

Good causes in the bill are:

- Tenant committed a substantial breach or repeated minor violations of the lease.
- Tenant habitually failed to pay rent timely when due.
- Tenant caused substantial damage to the property or engaged in disorderly conduct.
- Tenant engaged in illegal activity on the premises.
- Tenant refused to provide access to the property for repairs.
- Tenant refused to accept a new lease agreement.
- Landlord seeks to use the property for a personal or familial use.
- Landlord seeks to make substantial repairs or renovations to the property.
- Landlord seeks to remove the property from the rental market for a year or more.

Does Good Cause Eviction affect housing development?

No. The research is overwhelming that zoning, land use, interest rates, raw material costs, and other market forces affect new housing development. **There is not one shred of academic research indicating that Good Cause Eviction laws affect housing development.**

Sign On: Endorse Good Cause Eviction in Maryland as an Organization!

bit.ly/GoodCauseSignOn

Is there a small landlord exemption?

Yes, owners of five or few rental units are exempted. Language in the 2025 bill will clarify this exemption and ensure that large corporate landlords do not hide behind LLCs claiming to be small landlords.

How will this law affect the process landlords follow to file an eviction complaint?

Currently, if a tenant refuses to vacate after proper notice, the landlord has to go to court and file a "tenant holding over" complaint. **Under the Good Cause Eviction law landlords would still be able to admit their business records at court to show any history of misconduct by the tenant.**

If a tenant is not doing anything wrong, they should not be forced to leave their home. If they are doing something wrong under their lease or the law, then they can still be evicted during their lease term for breach of lease or non-renewed at the end of their lease. Good Cause Eviction only requires the landlord to state the reason why they want the tenant to vacate.

What does this law have to do with "vacancy control" and rent stabilization?

Nothing. Corporate landlord lobbyists are trying to undermine local rent stabilization laws by preventing the counties from passing a key component called "vacancy control." This is a separate issue and should not be included in a bill about giving counties more authority.

Renters United Maryland is a statewide coalition leading the fight for safe, affordable rental housing for all Marylanders.

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