

Recitals

Whereas, a disproportionate number of Baltimore City residents are under the constant threat of eviction and displacement from lease nonrenewals.

Whereas, this housing crisis disproportionately impacts Black and Latine families, essential workers, and those with service jobs.

Whereas, in response to the growing need for housing security, the Baltimore City Council introduced a legislative package to address this need that included a requirement that landlords offer a renewal for residential leases unless “just cause” is provided.

Whereas, the legislation was sponsored by Councilmember Antonio Glover of Baltimore’s 13th District to specifically address an eviction loophole that allowed for hundreds of City residents experiencing economic hardship to be left without secure housing. In July 2021, data showed that evictions from this loophole had doubled in just 2 years.

Whereas, shortly after this legislation temporarily became law, it became the subject of legal attacks under the Maryland Constitution with opponents arguing that the City did not have the authority to pass such a law. The law expired as an emergency measure before those legal issues were fully resolved.

Whereas, during the short time the City bill was effective, the City Council did not observe any of the pitfalls that opponents of the City bill predicted. Because of the bill, the City Council to deliver much needed relief to residents without causing undue hardship for any.

Whereas, the City’s “just cause” legislation did not prevent a landlord from evicting a tenant that had violated the terms of their lease or otherwise posed a threat to the community.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, that the Baltimore City Council urges the Maryland General Assembly to pass HB 477/SB 644 (Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Just Cause Termination Provisions), which would allow local jurisdictions to enact “just cause eviction” laws and protect residents from arbitrary, discriminatory, or retaliatory displacement from their communities.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor of Baltimore City, the Governor of Maryland, the President of the Maryland Senate, the Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates, the Baltimore City Senate and House Delegations to the General Assembly, the Baltimore City Council President and the President’s legislative staff, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.