



House Bill 744 – Landlord and Tenant – Residential Leases – Tenant Rights and Protections (Tenant Protection Act)

Position: Oppose

Maryland REALTORS® oppose HB 744 which makes several changes to landlord tenant law.

Specifically, the REALTORS® oppose the reduction of time (45 days to 30) to return the security deposit particularly in instances where tenant damage has occurred to the property. HB 744 not only requires that a full accounting of the damage be completed within the 30 days, it requires specific notice of bills, invoices, descriptions of the materials used, number of units and the name address and telephone number of the person completing the work. In order to provide this information, all of the work repairing the unit would have to be completed. While that may be achievable for relatively minor wear and tear, it is difficult when a unit has been significantly damaged. In fact, even 45 days can be a challenge to have completed the work. This provision not only shortens the time but requests information that will make it harder to meet the current time frame. Many landlords are already motivated to repair and return a unit to the rental market as soon as possible. Landlords shouldn't be penalized when a particularly difficult repair takes more time.

The REALTORS® also believe the current rent escrow process works. However, this bill includes provisions that would make landlords potentially liable for the relocation of a tenant and potential damages. The rent escrow law provides appropriate balance between the interests of the tenant and landlord.

Finally, bill provides that a victim of domestic violence or stalking can submit a report of a caseworker to establish the person is victim of these crime in place of a protective order or peace order. The REALTORS® believe more certainty is granted by the court orders.

For these reasons, the REALTORS® recommend an unfavorable report.

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