



Odette Ramos

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Testimony

HB674: Landlord/Tenant – Stay of Eviction Proceeding for Rental Assistance Determination

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FAVORABLE

Chair Barve and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

I am writing to urge your support for **HB674: Landlord/Tenant-Stay of Eviction Proceeding for Rental Assistance Determination**.

HB674 will authorize the court to temporarily pause eviction proceedings when a rental assistance application is pending. It will also prevent landlords who refuse the rental assistance from using the court process to collect rent. Maryland has an average of 705 evictions per month in the last half of 2021 despite having enough rental assistance to pay all back rent due.

This legislation is important to help renters stay in their homes, which prevents the spread of COVID but also helps to stabilize our families. There are millions of federal and state dollars still available for rental assistance. In some cases, the payments could be delayed, but sometimes landlords just refuse to use the assistance. This does not make sense. This legislation requires the courts to stay the eviction until rental assistance comes through and forces landlords to use the rental assistance rather than use eviction as a way to collect rent.

Families are still hurting economically from the pandemic. This legislation is one way we can stabilize our families, help them receive the funds that are available to them, and ensure that landlords are made whole.

I urge your favorable report for this legislation.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions. I can be reached on 410-396-4814 or via email at odette.ramos@baltimorecity.gov.

Respectfully Submitted:

Odette Ramos

Baltimore City Councilwoman, District 14