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THINK JEWISHLY. ACT LOCALLY.

TESTIMONY ON HB86 - POSITION: FAVORABLE

Landlord and Tenant – Residential Leases – Tenant Rights and Protections (Tenant Protection Act of 2022)

TO: Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Molly Amster, on behalf of Jews United for Justice

My name is Molly Amster. I am a resident of District 43 and am the Maryland Policy Director and Baltimore Director for Jews United for Justice (JUFJ). I am submitting this testimony on behalf of JUFJ in support of HB86, the Tenant Protection Act of 2022. JUFJ organizes 6,000 Jews and allies from across Maryland in support of local social, racial, and economic justice campaigns.

Jewish sacred texts recognize that having safe, stable housing is key to a healthy society, and we know that it is key to reducing racial inequities. These texts have taken on even more urgency in the past two years: all people should be able to stay in their homes, especially during a pandemic.

HB86 will provide Maryland renters four overdue, meaningful reforms that help balance landlord-tenant relations: adds documentation of security deposit deductions; expands grounds for early lease termination to include victims of stalking; allows renters access to utility information at master-meter buildings; and gives tenant organizations the right of assembly in their buildings.

This bill passed the House in 2021 and reflects amendments and compromises achieved in the 2020 session. **JUFJ supports the Tenant Protection Act as reintroduced and on behalf of the organization I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB86.**