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MAJORITY WHIP

Judicial Proceedings Committee

Joint Committee on
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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

SB 592 – Favorable – Landlord and Tenant – Right to Redemption of Leased
Premises – Form of Payment

Senate Bill 592 is a very simple bill that will prevent landlords from refusing a check issued by a political subdivision or on behalf of a government entity solely because it is not one of the forms of payment listed in statute. The Montgomery County Office of the County Executive brought the need for this legislation to my attention. They have encountered problems when landlords refuse this form of payment, for whatever reason.

The Maryland Association of Counties notes that a total of over 70,000 applications for rental assistance have been processed with over 40,000 households having received assistance already. SB 592 will ensure housing stability for vulnerable tenants when landlords are not accepting emergency rental assistance payments made on behalf of tenants.

The opposition is largely focused on a hypothetical tangential issue about contracting for anything beyond the payment itself. I'm confident we can work out these concerns, as a contract with the local government is not a feature of this legislation. Accepting the form of payment would be binding to the landlord as far as the rent payment goes, but it does not require them to concede anything to the local government in exchange on the face of the legislative language and clear intent of the bill.

For these reasons I respectfully request a favorable report on SB 592.