

Testimony
Just-Cause Eviction Protection - Bill MC12-20
(bill title changed to Stable Homes Act)
12/09/19

Good evening. I'm Diane Hibino, Co-President of the League of Women Voters of Montgomery County.

Tonight, I'm here to urge you to join us in supporting the Just-Cause Eviction Protection Bill 12-20.

- The Maryland State League, of which we are part, believes that requiring landlords to provide reasons for either terminating tenancy or initiating evictions is a means of discouraging retaliation.
- Our County League adds support for a warrant of habitability and protection against retaliatory evictions.

Without this protection, renters are in danger of losing their homes in retaliation for pressing for safe, habitable dwellings. A stated reason should also help protect them from discrimination due to race, religion, and similar causes.

This issue is increasingly important as Montgomery County's renter population continues to grow.

According to County Planning Department data, it has increased from 32.1% in 1990 to 35.3% in 2016. During this period, the County added 91,000 new households, 45% of them renters. New renters tend to be younger or older households. Older households often have fewer resources for coping with losing their homes. Younger ones seem to be just opting out of living in Montgomery County. The percentage of heads of households under age 35 in the County declined 23% between 1990 and 2016.

Please help keep Montgomery County vibrant and able to provide safe affordable housing for all.

Vote yes for Bill 12-20.