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My name is Magnus and I'm testifying because I oppose Bill 15-23 and want rent stabilization for me and my family through the HOME Act. Right now, I live with my sister and I am currently unemployed. I get jobs here and there but am unable to contribute to my rent. Since I do not have a green card, I cannot get all the jobs that are offered. But once I get it, I can contribute. But even with the current rent, it's not like I can make a dent. My sister got into an accident and has had two surgeries, so she also does not work full time. It is very difficult to keep the apartment due to both of our struggles. Things have gotten so much worse after COVID. Everyone is struggling.

I started living in this apartment in 2020 and the rent was 1500 dollars. Now it is 1900 dollars. The latest increase was 7.8%, which means I would not be covered by Bill 15-23. How am I supposed to build a life here if I am living day to day, not knowing if I will have a home the next day.

I am in the library every day because I cannot afford my cable bill and internet. No matter what library I go to, Bethesda, Gaithersburg, or anywhere else, I see people doing the same thing. People come in with a suitcase and toothbrush because they do not know where they will sleep at night. It is clear we are all struggling. How is this acceptable? We need rent stabilization to survive. I need rent stabilization to survive. Or else, we will have more homeless people or will have to go to other cities or states.

We are planning to relocate because we can't afford to stay here. If we get evicted, we do not know where we will go.

It is a lot to handle. It is the grace of God that I am alright today and am fortunate that we have the library that we can go to today.

This process feels like a cycle. Tenants come to a building to build a life in Montgomery County, landlord increases the price out of nowhere. We have to leave and go to another building. The rents go up there. We leave. And, it keeps going and going and going.

Under the HOME Act, I would be able to stay in one place and thrive. It would be life changing. Under Bill 15-23, I would be in the same horrible situation now.

I ask for the council to support and pass the HOME Act as soon as possible to give me and people like me the opportunity to succeed.