



COMMISSION ON AGING

January 31, 2022

Senator Jeff Waldstreicher
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401
jeff.waldstreicher@senate.state.md.us

RE: SB 0006

Dear Senator Waldstreicher,

I am writing on behalf of the Montgomery County Commission on Aging to express our strong **support** for SB 0006. A primary area of our concern is the protection and support for vulnerable older adults.

The Montgomery County Commission on Aging (COA) is authorized by the Older Americans Act, P.L. 116-131, and was established by Montgomery County in 1974 to advise County government on the needs, interests and issues of Older Adult residents, and to advocate on their behalf at the local, state and national levels.

While the Commission on Aging would agree that most landlords operate with just and transparent policies, the four common sense clauses in SB0006 would require all landlords to provide tenants with standardized and needed protections. The standardization and transparency of ratio billing statements will allow for older and vulnerable adults to know that every tenant is treated equally and fairly. The right of free assembly of a tenant organization in a meeting room will give the opportunity for tenants to join forces and have a stronger voice if a landlord's property is in a constant state of disrepair or violates health and safety regulations. Furthermore, the Homeless Persons Representation Project testified on this bill and reported that from the over 20,000 reported cases in 2020 of intimate partner violence only 10,310 protective orders were issued. The provisions of the bill that add additional sources of verification of abuse give victims an easier path to find safe housing. Passing this bill will reduce the economic effects of an additional rent burden, will prevent homelessness, and limit the possibility of repeat offenses for those victims in dire need of a safe home.

Older adults comprise approximately one-quarter of Montgomery County renters. For them, housing instability can have significant costs including homelessness and institutionalization. Legislation such as this can help stabilize our communities by making our homes a safer place to live. We thank you for introducing SB0006 and ask for your support in ensuring its passage by the General Assembly during the 2022 session.

Sincerely yours,

Barbara Selter

Barbara Selter, Chair
Commission on Aging

cc: Delegate Vaughn Stewart
Montgomery County Delegation

Department of Health and Human Services

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