

MedChi

The Maryland State Medical Society
1211 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-5516
410.539.0872
Fax: 410.547.0915
1.800.492.1056
www.medchi.org

TO: The Honorable Kumar P. Barve, Chair
Members, House Environment and Transportation Committee
The Honorable Vaughn Stewart

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
Christine K. Krone

DATE: February 22, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 674 – *Landlord and Tenant – Stay of Eviction Proceeding for Rental Assistance Determination*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **supports** House Bill 674.

House Bill 674 would grant a stay of an eviction proceeding for a tenant who has applied for rental assistance and is waiting for a determination of their application. It also prevents a landlord who refuses to accept rental assistance from initiating any other action against the tenant to collect rent. It has been widely recognized that evictions lead to an increase in homelessness. Homeless individuals are often forced to live in overcrowded facilities due to the lack of sufficient capacity to provide shelter and services to the increasing number of individuals who find themselves homeless. Further, the health-related consequences of eviction have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the overcrowded environments, it is nearly impossible to follow COVID-19 precautionary measures, thereby leading to significantly higher rates of COVID-19 amongst the homeless population.

Eviction moratoriums were in place at the start of the pandemic and while MedChi understands that an absolute moratorium cannot be maintained, allowing residents to remain in their homes pending a determination of rental assistance is a small but meaningful and fair approach to mitigating the significant health consequences of evictions for a specific segment of the rental population that finds itself at risk of homelessness. MedChi requests a favorable report for House Bill 674.

For more information call:

Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
Christine K. Krone
410-244-7000