

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORT

2020 Legislative Session

Reference No.: CB-016-2020

Draft No.: 2

Committee: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Date: 05/18/2020

Action: FAV (A)

REPORT:

Committee Vote: Favorable as amended, 11-0 (In favor: Council Members Turner, Anderson-Walker, Davis, Dernoga, Franklin, Glaros, Harrison, Hawkins, Ivey, Streeter and Taveras)

The Committee of the Whole met on May 18, 2020 to consider CB-16-2020 and proposed amendments. After staff overview, the Committee considered amendments presented in the form of Amendment sheets No. 1 and 2. The Committee also received testimony from Ms. Tangie Thomas in support of CB-16-2020 and Mr. Bruce Bereano in opposition to language regarding consolidated storage. Ms. Keona Scott and Ms. Quantane Higginbotham submitted written testimony in support of CB-16-2020. Prince George's County Association of Realtors also provided written testimony requesting ability to charge tenants for returned check fees incurred when tenants write checks on accounts with insufficient funds. AOBA provided proposed language which included payment plans for tenants with good history of making rent payments.

Representatives of the County Executive's Office and the Office of Law indicated that additional time was needed to review the amendments prior to offering comments.

During the discussion, Council Members suggested further amendments to ensure legal sufficiency and requested inclusion of all amendments in a new draft-2. Ms. Best-James, Council's Legislative Officer summarized amendments in the new draft, the Committee made additional amendments, and after robust discussion, based on a motion by Council Member Ivey and seconded by Council Member Streeter, the Committee voted 11-0 on Proposed DR-2 as amended.

The amendments include: that the landlord(s) enter into rent payment plans (of 12 months duration or longer) with tenants that are unable to make timely rent payments due to illness, job loss, or any issue or incident related to the COVID-19 state-wide emergency; requiring payment plans being provided for tenants that have demonstrated a history of consistent rent payments; requiring tenants provide documents as proof of illness, job loss, or other issue; included provision that payment plan align with duration of the lease; clarifying that "state-wide emergency" is "as declared by the Governor of Maryland on March 5, 2020, as amended or extended by the Governor, by Executive Order Number 20-03-30-01" and "20-05-13-01", "and as defined by Prince George's County Executive Order No 8-2020, and if amended, and under

Section 14-111 of the Public Safety Article of the Maryland Code”; removed references to “lockout” and “consolidated storage”; include exemption to late fees or penalties for returned check fees.

In addition, the Committee requested further Code review by Council’s legal counsel concerning penalties for landlord(s) that do not comply with the emergency-related mandates and instructed counsel to include appropriate language in Draft-2, if allowed.