



Todd M. Turner
Chair
District 4

July 30, 2020

The Honorable Larry Hogan
Governor
State of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Hogan:

I write on behalf of the Prince George's County Council, to urge the extension and expansion of State eviction and other protections in Maryland beyond its anticipated expiration date of Friday, July 31st. The County Council, voting in support of this letter on July 27th, joins members of the General Assembly, Maryland Attorney General Brian Frosh, jurisdictions throughout the state of Maryland, and several legal, community and nonprofit groups seeking to extend evictions protections to Marylanders as a result of the COVID-19 health and economic crisis.

The Council appreciates your leadership in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including issuing Executive Orders on March 16, 2020 and April 3, 2020 (No. 20-04-03-01), which temporarily prohibited evictions of tenants suffering substantial loss of income due to COVID-19 and certain actions, including residential and commercial evictions, during the declared State of Emergency. We also appreciate your June 29, 2020 Executive Order (No. 20-06-29-01) prohibiting termination of certain residential services and late fees during the State of Emergency which is expected to terminate this week.

As you are aware, Prince George's County, one of the epicenters of the COVID-19 pandemic, is working diligently to address the many health, economic and social impacts on our residents. With respect to housing and rental assistance, the County Council, working with County Executive Angela D. Alsobrooks, has passed legislation¹, established several programs with the support of both Federal and County funds.

As part of the Approved Fiscal Year 2021 County Budget, the Council approved the use of over \$8 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding for housing and rental assistance, including establishing the County Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program in early May. While Prince George's County is seeking additional ways to provide much-needed relief, including collaborating with our nonprofit partners, individual, private and foundation partners to provide support, without additional State and/or Federal assistance, we will not be able to meet the need and avoid another housing crisis in the County.

In the interest of brevity, the Council adopts the research, findings and recommendations expressed in Maryland Attorney General Brian Frosh's July 28th letter to you on behalf of his COVID-19 Access to Justice Task Force, the July 8th letter from Delegates Kumar Barve, Chair, and Dana Stein, Vice-Chair, of the House Environment and Transportation Committee to Secretary Kenneth Holt and the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee Workgroup Report on COVID-19 and Housing, dated July 22, 2020. In summary, these include the following points:

- (1) Extension of the eviction protections in your current Executive Orders, as well as Maryland judicial administrative orders, until at least January 2021;
- (2) Expansion of the eviction protections to include all evictions types, including holdover actions and breach of lease cases, regardless of proof of substantial loss of income due to COVID-19 during the State of Emergency;
- (3) Expansion of the protections to include prohibition of the imposition of late fees and penalties in residential lease situations during the State of Emergency;
- (4) Additional State rental assistance funding, beyond the currently designated \$30 million in CARES Act Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) recently announced, to supplement County and local rental assistance; and
- (5) We would add mortgage and payment relief for landlords and property owners during the State of Emergency.

For the above reasons, we respectfully urge your continued support to the residents of Prince George's County and the State of Maryland by implementing the above recommendations. Thank you in advance for your consideration and continued response in crisis.

Sincerely,



Hon. Todd M. Turner
County Council Chair

cc: Hon. Angela D. Alsobrooks, County Executive
Hon. Brian E. Frosh, Maryland Attorney General
Hon. Bill Ferguson, President, Maryland State Senate
Hon. Adrienne A. Jones, Maryland House of Delegates
Members, Prince George's County Council

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¹ See CB-16-2020 - An Emergency Act concerning Landlord-Tenant Code - Prohibition of rent increases, rental terminations and late fees during the COVID-19 public health crisis for the purpose of amending the Landlord-Tenant Code to prohibit rent increases, rental terminations; provides payment plans with certain tenants and prohibit late fees or penalties from being charged during the COVID-19 state-wide emergency.

Hogan Eviction Extension Council Letter Final (7-30-20)

Final Audit Report

2020-07-31

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