



Date: February 5, 2025

Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Senator William C. Smith, Jr.  
2 East  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: SB0556 - Real Property - Fraudulent Possession and Unauthorized Lease or Listing - Prohibition and Removal-Support**

Dear Senator Smith:

SB0556 would change the methods of dealing with fraudulent possession of property (squatting) and illegal leasing or listing of property.

Currently, in Maryland, squatters are considered trespassers and must be evicted through the judicial system. If a guest or squatter refuses to leave, a property owner may ask the court to issue an order to remove them by filing a "wrongful detainer" action in District Court. In general, a property owner must:

- Give the squatter written notice to vacate the property within a specific time frame.
- File an eviction complaint. If the squatter refuses to leave, the property owner files an eviction complaint in court.
- Attend a hearing. The property owner or their attorney attends a hearing to remove the squatter.
- Criminal charges. If there is evidence of trespassing or breaking into the property, the squatter may face criminal charges.

These requirements are unnecessarily onerous and lengthy to property owners. SB0556 would ease this burden on property owners and return some sanity to a situation that is affecting more and more homeowners who currently feel their rights are ignored.

The Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, a business advocacy organization of nearly 700 members, supports this bill. We therefore request that you give this bill a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike McMullin".

Mike McMullin  
President  
Carroll County Chamber of Commerce

CC: Delegate Chris Tomlinson  
Senator Justin Ready

**Carroll County Chamber of Commerce • 9 East Main Street • Westminster, MD 21157  
Phone: 410-848-9050 • Fax: 410-876-1023 • [www.carrollcountychamber.org](http://www.carrollcountychamber.org)**