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June 18, 2021

Representative Minor-Brown
Legislative Hall
411 Legislative Ave.
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Representative Minor-Brown,

I write in strong support of SS1 to SB 101, which provides a right to counsel for low-income tenants facing eviction. With 18,000 eviction filings per year in the years before COVID-19, Delaware was already facing an eviction crisis even before this pandemic. The soon to be lifted moratorium on evictions could be devastating for Delaware families. Poverty is both a leading cause and effect of eviction and far too many evictions lead to homelessness.

The January 27, 2021 Point in Time count identified 1,579 Delawareans experiencing homelessness. Local experts argue the true number is much higher. In December, New Castle County purchased and converted a hotel into the Hope Center to house hundreds of residents experiencing homelessness, but we need to do even more. The most effective way to reduce homelessness is by preventing it in the first place and this legislation will help keep families in their homes.

In addition to being the right thing to do, this bill is also a great investment. For every dollar spent on right to counsel, the state will save \$2.76 on back end social services. And that doesn't even account for money spent by local jurisdictions like New Castle County.

SS1 to SB 101 will help low-income tenants through a confusing and difficult process and will result in better outcomes for tenants, landlords, and our communities. Furthermore, the pre-eviction diversion process will help to resolve a large majority of cases before they ever get to court. Thank you for being a sponsor and champion of this important legislation.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Meyer", is positioned below the text "Yours in service,".

Matthew Meyer
New Castle County Executive