

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689

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Statement of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 689 **Bill 8-26, Landlord-Tenant Relations - Prohibition Against Price Coordination and** **Rent-Setting Algorithms** March 10, 2026

Members of the Montgomery County Council: Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Bill 8-26 which prohibits price coordination regarding rents and prohibits the use of rent-setting algorithms. ATU Local 689 supports this piece of legislation and encourages the Council to support it as well.

ATU Local 689 represents nearly 16,000 active and retired transit professionals throughout Southern Maryland, Washington DC, and Northern Virginia including workers at WMATA and MetroAccess. Thousands of our members live in Prince George's and Montgomery counties and the cost of housing is one of the key issues impacting them and their families every day. Safe, affordable, and reliable housing and transportation are two key factors essential for economic upwards mobility. Our members help provide affordable and reliable transportation for millions of workers in the region every day. Many hardworking and dedicated families in Montgomery County face challenges to afford housing. Corporate consolidation and out-of-state management companies operating apartment buildings, complexes, and other rental properties are responsible for part of the steep housing costs.

Price coordination and rent-setting algorithms are not tools to bring down the cost of housing. In fact, their use results in higher rents and housing costs, hidden fees, and stifles competition - hurting consumers and taking advantage of families. ATU Local 689 has been committed to fighting for economic justice for more than 110 years. Bill 8-26 contains critical and meaningful reforms to Montgomery County's housing and rental marketplace and evens the playing field for working families.

ATU Local 689 is grateful to Councilmember Jawando for introducing this legislation, and for his continual efforts to champion reforms not just at the local level but at the state level as well. Local 689 encourages the Montgomery County Council to pass Bill 8-26 and bring relief to working families.