

BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL



HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

25-0141

Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act

Public Testimony

Written Testimony
Bill: **25-0141**
Position: **Favorable**

February 24, 2026

Dear Members of the City Council:

As a concerned Baltimore resident and a renter, I am in favor of Bill 25-0141, the Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act.

Renters make up about half of Baltimore's population, and they deserve to know who is managing the property they call home. Sometimes it's impossible to tell who is really behind a bad corporate landlord or how many properties they operate in the city. Bad actors shouldn't be able to hide behind shell companies to exploit our communities without accountability. This bill would also provide tenants with a formal complaint process and the right to hear an explanation from the Housing Department when they think their landlord obtained a license by fraud.

In addition, this bill will improve transparency between the Housing Department and the public. I urge your support of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Little
881 W Lombard St
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February 24, 2026

James Torrence, Chair
Housing & Economic Development Committee
Baltimore City Council
City Hall, Du Burns Council Chamber, 4th Floor
100 N. Holliday Street,
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

RE: SUPPORT – BILL 25-0141 – Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act (“Safe Homes Now” Act)

Dear Chairman Torrence and Members of the Committee:

The Green & Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI) writes in support of Bill 25-0141. This Bill is necessary because it would remedy a current fault in Baltimore City law by providing tenants with a formal complaint process when they believe their landlord improperly or fraudulently obtained a rental license.

GHHI has advocated for tenants’ rights in Maryland and throughout the country for over three decades. Notably, GHHI spearheaded the enactment of the groundbreaking Maryland Reduction of Lead Risk in Housing Law in 1994 and has worked to help reduce childhood lead poisoning in our city and state since then by 99%. Today, GHHI provides tenants’ rights assistance, rental property owner compliance assistance, and legal representation of tenants statewide in Maryland for the repair of lead hazards and other hazardous conditions in tenant-occupied homes. In addition to serving as the President and CEO of GHHI, I also serve as the Chair of the Maryland Lead Poisoning Prevention Commission and serve or have served as a member of the EPA Children’s Health Protection Advisory Committee, the CDC Lead Exposure and Prevention Advisory Committee, and the Maryland Green and Healthy Homes Task Force among others.

Pursuant to Baltimore City Code, Article 13, § 5-6 (4), a landlord may only obtain or renew a rental license if “the premises are in compliance with all Federal, State, and City laws and regulations governing lead paint[.]” Notably, this means that owners of lead-affected rental properties in Baltimore City must satisfy the requirements of the Maryland Reduction of Lead in Housing Subtitle of the Maryland Environment Title. Under Md. Environment Article § 6-815, owners of rental properties built before 1978 must have their property inspected by an MDE-certified inspector and receive a passing certificate before a new tenant moves into the property to satisfy the Full Lead Risk Reduction Standard. Furthermore, under Md. Environment Article § 6-819, landlords must also satisfy the Modified Lead Risk Reduction Standard within 30 days

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after receiving a notice of defect for lead by having the property inspected by an MDE-certified lead inspector—after any necessary work has been completed—and receive a passing certificate.

While working with tenants living in lead-affected rental properties in Baltimore City, GHHI has observed issues related to the validity and integrity of this inspection and certification process. For example, pursuant to Md. Environment Article § 6-815(a), Md. Environment Article § 6-819(a)(2)(ii), and COMAR 26.16.05.08, an MDE-certified lead inspector should not pass a property for inspection if there is any chipping or peeling lead paint present on interior or exterior surfaces of the property structure. However, many tenants come to us shortly after moving into a rental property or shortly after their rental property receives a passing lead inspection certificate reporting that their rental property still has visible and obvious chipping or peeling lead paint. This is cause for concern that landlords in Baltimore City may employ lead inspectors who are willing to issue falsified inspection certificates.

One of the most notable examples of this is the recent case involving Rodney Bryan Barkley. On October 3, 2025, in the Circuit Court for Baltimore City, Barkley plead guilty to four counts of Falsifying a Lead Paint Risk Reduction Certificate and one count of Operating a Radiation Machine Without Obtaining a License (Case Number: C-24-CR-25-002915). In addition, MDE suspended Barkley's accreditation as a lead-certified inspector and has officially invalidated 1,400 lead certificates he had previously issued. As a result of Barkley's actions and those of like inspectors, families that are suffering from the affordable housing crisis and who occupy these rental properties are unknowingly exposed to lead and other hazards resulting directly from this kind of fraudulent activity.

The impacts and harms of lead poisoning are devastating. Poisoning from lead in paint, dust, and contaminated soil contributes to severe issues such as significant learning disabilities, loss of IQ, speech development problems, attention deficit disorder, poor school performance and violent, and aggressive behavior that heavily burdens low-income communities. Lead poisoning especially harms children by contributing to cycles of learning disabilities, poor school performance, and higher school dropout rates and juvenile delinquency that disproportionately prevent low-income children in Maryland from being able to thrive and which burdens the City through increased special education and criminal justice costs. Children poisoned by lead are also seven times more likely to drop out of school, six times more likely to be involved in the juvenile justice system and can suffer upwards of two million dollars in lost lifetime earnings.

This legislation is necessary so that tenants and their families who live in properties where they believe their landlord obtained fraudulent lead inspection certificates can ensure that the City will take necessary action to enforce strong housing standards and Maryland's lead laws. Maryland has one of the strongest lead laws in the country, and tenants need to have confidence that landlords who attempt to elude it will be held accountable.

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Without this Bill, landlords who engage in this activity will continue to take advantage of tenants and cause irreparable harm to them, to their families, and to our City.

For these reasons, we ask you to SUPPORT Bill 25-0141.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signed by:

6171FEFD32CD49A...
Ruth Ann Norton
President and CEO

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF Bill 25-0141
Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act

TO: Chair Torrence and members of the Baltimore City Council Housing and Economic Development Committee

FROM: Laura Grothaus

OPENING: My name is Laura Grothaus. I am a resident of Baltimore City District 14. I am submitting this testimony in support of Bill 25-0141, the Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act.

I believe that stable housing is essential to vibrant, thriving communities, and that stable housing occurs, in part, through transparent, equitable, and accountable rental licensing processes. Bill 25-0141 aims to improve housing conditions by building a framework for those processes. It holds bad-acting landlords accountable, creates transparency in the rental licensing process, and ensures landlords can't retaliate against tenants based on their immigration status.

Friends of mine have suffered from mold problems present in their apartments from the time they started renting, then faced both health issues and difficulties getting the landlord to address the problem. The bill will offer tenants a formal complaint process and the right to hear an explanation from the Housing Department when if they think a landlord obtained a license by fraud. Additionally, it will address the conflict of interest between landlords and private inspectors, since private inspectors are passing properties that are in dangerous, unhealthy conditions. The bill will remove inspectors from the approved inspector list if they are found to have issued a fraudulent inspection. Additionally, in this time when friends who are immigrants are afraid to even leave the house, this bill offers security that they will have equitable access to a safe place to live.

In closing, I believe that this bill will positively impact our community. When residents have safe and stable homes with clear lines of communication to and accountability for landlords, we all benefit. It gives us healthier lives and more time to concentrate on the things that matter most.

I respectfully urge Councilmembers to support Bill 25-0141, Rental Dwelling and Safety Enforcement Act .



Council Bill 25-0141 – Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act

Hearing before the Baltimore City Council
Housing and Economic Development Committee
On February 24, 2026

Position: Favorable

Maryland Legal Aid submits its written testimony on CB 25-0141 at the request of the bill sponsor Councilmember Odette Ramos.

Maryland Legal Aid is a non-profit law firm that provides free legal services to the State's low-income and vulnerable residents. Our 11 offices serve residents in each of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions and handle a range of civil legal matters, including for Marylanders struggling with substandard housing and housing insecurity. Maryland Legal Aid advocates for the right of low-income renters to live in safe housing. In our experience, the City's rental licensing scheme is failing renters because of perfunctory inspections, friendly relationships among property owners and home inspectors, and lack of agency oversight. We urge a favorable report on CB 25-0141 to strengthen the quality of inspections and reduce abuse of the system.

Rental inspection and licensing

CB 25-0141 corrects glaring weaknesses in the existing rental licensing scheme:

- The bill requires *physical* inspections for rental licensing inspections. One might assume that an inspection of a rental home would occur "physically," but Maryland Legal Aid is aware of home inspectors completing inspection reports based on photos received from the landlord. In 2025, we discovered the inspection reports of one home inspector who claimed to have performed inspections at more than 60 apartments and townhouses *on a single day*. Our clients residing in some of those units attested to ongoing substandard conditions, bringing into question whether the inspector actually inspected all the units as claimed or inspected them virtually by using photos or video. On page 6, lines 19-26, CB 25-0141 defines a rental inspection as a physical inspection. The bill could go one step further by expressly prohibiting virtual inspections.
- CB 25-0141 also increases the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) accountability measures in the licensing scheme. The bill reduces the influence of repeat-customer relationships between landlords and inspectors by prohibiting the use of a single inspector more than twice in an eight-year period. Page 12:13-16. DHCD will have the power to bar a registered home inspector from performing future rental licensing inspections if the inspector has approved a rental property that they knew or should have known was unsatisfactory. Page 11:24-12:2. Additionally, the bill sets forth enforcement power against inspectors via civil citation (page 13:1-8) and establishes specific audit requirements for rental

licensing inspections (page 13:20-25). In the 2018 legislation to expand rental licensing, the Council omitted hard numerical targets from DHCD's audit obligation. Thereafter, it became unclear outside the agency whether DHCD had conducted audits annually and in any meaningful quantity. Not only does this bill require an annual audit of between 100 and 200 inspections, it further requires DHCD to publish the findings of these audits on the agency's website.

- Finally, under CB 25-0141, when DHCD revokes a rental license, DHCD must reinspect the property using its own inspectors, not the landlord's contracted home inspector, before issuing a new license. Page 20:15-26.

Transparency in rental licensing applications

The bill adds valuable transparency tools for renters and the public to identify both rental licensing fraud and the typically hidden connections among entity landlords.

- As to rental licensing transparency, landlords will have to distribute copies of rental inspection reports to the tenants of the inspected units. Page 14:1-6. Additionally, the bill obligates DHCD to make publicly available "all rental inspections records associated with the rental dwelling," as well as "all documents submitted by the holder of the rental dwelling license as part of their application for the rental dwelling license." Commonly, to understand suspicious licensing practices, Maryland Legal Aid attorneys must request these records for our clients through a Public Information Act request. Although the 2018 rental licensing ordinance required DHCD to provide public access to code violations information, DHCD has yet to comply. The agency provides public access only to open violation notices, leaving the public in the dark about past violations and abatements.
- Critically, CB 25-0141 requires entity landlords of multi-family dwellings to disclose beneficial ownership information (BOI) in their rental property registration. This ownership information must identify names and addresses of persons, members, or partners of the entity whose share of ownership of the entity exceeds 25 percent. These disclosures will enhance the enforcement capabilities of DHCD and the City's Law Department against rogue enterprises, who are able to hide behind "shell" entities to evade accountability for their unlawful activities in the rental market – including abuse of the rental licensing law.

Tenant relocation from unlicensed rental dwellings

CB 25-0141 adds new protections for tenants who are subject to an administrative order to vacate an unlicensed rental unit. Although these occurrences are rare, this bill provides two important supports to tenants in these circumstances. Page 15:10-23. First, DHCD must provide notice, which includes relocation resource information, to each tenant on the doors of their respective dwelling units. Secondly, DHCD will financially support the tenants' relocation. The revenue to afford these relocations should come from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, which, under the 2018 rental licensing legislation, receives funds directly from rental housing registration fees.

Enforcement against extortive practices against immigrant tenants

Given the current political environment, CB 25-0141 uses rental licensing to try to prevent attacks on immigrant renters. Pages 19:33-20:14. The bill sets forth several obligations of landlords, violation of which would result in suspension or revocation of their rental licenses. These provisions prohibit landlords from demanding immigration or citizenship information from tenants; threatening to disclose or disclosing such information to another person, such as a law enforcement agency; seeking to evict a tenant based on their immigration or citizenship status; or extorting a tenant. Without these provisions, immigrant renters in Baltimore City have no civil remedy under local or state law to combat retaliation and harassment in the rental market based on their immigration or citizenship status.

Receivership of rental properties

Representing groups of Baltimore City tenants in Tenant Safety Act litigation, Maryland Legal Aid has seen the need for receivership of rental properties. This need arises acutely in cases of undercapitalized landlords with no access to loans for repairing perennially substandard multi-family buildings. The receivership section of CB 25-0141 will benefit renters, but one critical tool is missing: transfer of the rental property, via receivership, to ownership by the tenants. Maryland Legal Aid would be pleased to work with the Committee to develop a mechanism in the receivership process whereby the residents of the building have a right of first offer and access to resources, including City-supported financing, which would facilitate their acquisition of the property.

For the above-stated reasons, **Maryland Legal Aid urges the Committee's "favorable" report on CB 25-0141**. If you have any questions, please contact:

Zafar Shah
Advocacy Director for Human Right to Housing
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City Council of Baltimore Bill 25-0141
Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act
Hearing before the Housing and Economic Development Committee
May 12, 2026

Position: FAVORABLE

Chair Torrence and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Baltimore City Council Bill 25-0141, the Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act.

My name is Dr. Antoine Lovell. I reside in Maryland. I am a housing instability and eviction researcher. I serve as a member of the Research Council for the National Alliance to End Homelessness. I am also a former homeless youth. I wish to testify before you today about the empirical research regarding housing conditions, housing instability, enforcement systems, long-term public expenditure related to unsafe housing conditions, and the broader implications for the financial and social viability of Baltimore City as a result of this legislation.

Empirical studies demonstrate that substandard housing conditions result in a range of adverse effects at the individual, family, and community levels. For example, substandard housing conditions (i.e., mold exposure, rodent infestation, structural deterioration, lead exposure, poor ventilation, and/or lack of adequate heat) have been found to increase asthma, respiratory illness, and mental health issues; increase the risk of developing stress-related health issues; and negatively impact academic performance among children [1-3]. Moreover, housing instability increases the likelihood of homelessness, school mobility, economic uncertainty, and long-term neighborhood disinvestment [4-5].

Housing instability rarely exists in isolation. Rather, it is typically influenced by various factors, including substandard housing conditions, unaddressed maintenance needs, landlord neglect, and ineffective enforcement systems that contribute to involuntary removals and formal evictions [6]. By the time many families enter into eviction proceedings, they may have already experienced extended periods of deteriorating housing conditions and residential instability.

Among the key strengths of this legislation is that it shifts the emphasis from reactive enforcement toward a proactive housing governance framework. The body of research related to housing governance and code enforcement indicates that complaint-driven systems are insufficient to ensure safety since many tenants will not report hazards due to fear of retaliation, displacement, or loss of trust due to language barriers and concerns related to immigration status [7]. Therefore, some of the City's most vulnerable residents will continue to "fly under the radar" of enforcement systems.

Furthermore, several components of this legislation align with established best practices for housing stabilization. The extension of enforcement responsibilities beyond larger multi-unit buildings recognizes that substandard, unstable housing conditions frequently occur in smaller

units, which are subject to less regulation. Additionally, the requirement for increased audit frequency and disclosure of property ownership information addresses long-standing accountability concerns related to property owners who conceal their identities using shell companies and/or layered LLC arrangements.

Moreover, the prohibition against retaliatory action against a tenant based on a tenant's actual or perceived immigration status is crucial to both the health and stability of housing. Existing literature on complaint-driven enforcement systems shows that fearful tenants are less likely to report hazardous living conditions if they fear retaliation or immigration-related consequences. When tenants cannot safely report hazardous living conditions, unhealthy living environments persist longer, thereby increasing broad public health risks that extend well beyond individual households.

Additionally, the provision allowing for enhanced oversight of chronically distressed properties through regular inspections, audits, and/or complaint history patterns reflects preventive housing policy practice. Many researchers agree that earlier interventions tend to be less costly and more effective than waiting until properties require emergency interventions [8].

Similarly, the legislation's enhanced inspection oversight provisions are critical. Literature on regulatory compliance indicates that standards for accountability, transparency, compliance, enforcement, and inspection auditing can enhance regulatory compliance outcomes while providing greater institutional effectiveness [9].

Finally, the receivership provisions contained in this legislation are supported by existing research on housing stabilization. Researchers have consistently demonstrated that mechanisms that intervene early to stabilize distressed properties reduce displacement, retain housing quality, and avoid additional public expenditures associated with emergency shelter systems, healthcare utilization, and crisis response services [10].

However, there are also numerous cost-benefit dimensions to consider in terms of addressing unsafe housing conditions. The long-term societal costs associated with failing to address these issues include increased emergency healthcare utilization, shelter system costs, increased child welfare involvement, educational disruptions, workforce instability, and broadened public expenditures [11-12]. Conversely, preventive enforcement-based housing policies and stabilization policies are often substantially less expensive than responding once families enter into crisis systems.

In addition to the previously mentioned cost benefits, there are also numerous implications for Baltimore's long-term tax base and economic future. Areas experiencing chronic housing deterioration commonly experience declines in property values, reduced private investment, population loss, weakened commercial activity, and broader neighborhood decline. When residents flee neighborhoods due to unsafe and unstable housing conditions and neighborhood decay, cities incur losses in population, long-term tax revenue, workforce stability, and economic productivity. Safe, healthy housing conditions correlate strongly with neighborhood retention, local economic development, and the long-term fiscal sustainability of Baltimore City [14].

The legislative provisions also align with larger urban policy paradigms emphasizing the role of stable housing in promoting civic participation, neighborhood stability, and long-term urban vitality. A growing number of scholars argue that residents should be able to safely stay, live, and contribute to the communities they help sustain rather than fleeing those communities due to hazardous living conditions, instability, and neglect [15]. In addition, as a municipality, preventing neighborhood deterioration and retaining resident households is critically important to Baltimore's long-term economic competitiveness and social cohesion.

Lastly, research demonstrates that substandard housing conditions and weak enforcement systems disproportionately affect low-income communities of color due to historical structural disparities and the disinvestment in those communities. Thus, housing policy is not simply a matter of building code regulations and inspections, but also one of health equity, neighborhood stability, economic mobility, municipal sustainability, and the future trajectory of Baltimore communities.

Both as a scholar studying housing instability and as a formerly homeless youth, I believe this legislation provides an evidence-based approach for improving housing accountability across Baltimore City.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on Baltimore City Council Bill 25-0141.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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City of Baltimore Council Bill 25-0141 (First Reader)
Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act
Date: February 24th, 2025
Position: Unfavorable

The Maryland Multi-Housing Association (MMHA) is a professional trade association established in 1996, whose members consist of owners and managers of more than 214,000 rental housing homes in over 1015 apartment communities in Maryland. MMHA's Baltimore City members own or manage over 36,100 rental homes in this City, which includes 216 apartment communities which house almost 100,000 city residents. MMHA also represents over 270 associate member companies who supply goods and services to the multi-housing industry, in Baltimore and the rest of the state of Maryland.

MMHA, Regional Management, Inc., a founding member of MMHA and all of its members have continuously worked with the City Council, the Department of Housing and Community Development and other stakeholders in Baltimore City for over three decades to see that the need for safe and affordable rental properties is addressed in a manner that is fair to its members as well as equitable for their tenants.

MMHA and its Baltimore City members have reviewed the First Reader of Council Bill 25-0141. Although the Bill is clearly designed to address a wide number of issues that the Council, as well as stakeholders including property owners and managers, City agencies, and tenant advocates should explore, MMHA suggests that these key stakeholders must examine the Bill further in order to ensure that it will actually do what the Council intends.

MMHA suggests that the following items must be reviewed:

Page 3, Line 30: Prerequisites for New or Renewal License- Rental Inspection \$1,000

This new law needs Clarification - is this meant for Inspectors, is it a onetime fee, and how was this amount derived ?

Page 12, Lines 13-16, and 23-26 -To date DHCD's Inspector list has only 119 allowable Inspectors. The Bill suggests banning property owners from using the same Inspector within an **8 year period**. Although this concept likely stems from a recent situation regarding an unscrupulous Inspector, this mandate is unworkable- there are not enough Inspectors to accommodate this idea and it will undoubtedly cause backlogs for property owners and managers trying to comply with these mandatory inspections under current law.

Lines 24-25 – The Bill suggests that the property owner Applicant must send a copy of the Inspector's Report to The Housing Commissioner even though they must make it a part of their license responsibility, this is duplicitous when, if there is concern about a report, the Commissioner can request it or suspend an unresponsive Applicant.

Page 13, Lines 1-9 -Likewise the Penalty mentioned in this section is also duplicitous since the Housing Commissioner can suspend a license for any wrong doing.

Page 13 Lines 20-25 - This section mandates that property owners a)provide DHCD **100-200**

Annual inspections of licensed properties and b) to show those “audits” on the City’s Website. This is an enormous task which is also duplicitous, since Licensees are audited.

Pages 16-20, Section 5-15 discusses the Denial, Suspension or Revocation of a rental license.

Although much of this section is current law, the new language on Pg. 19, lines 16-27 is totally unworkable. Unauthorized tenants, squatters, hoarders, domestic violence and often tenants or guests with unmitigated mental illness is not unusual to be found in many in tenant circumstances. However, the section of this Bill suggesting that that a property owner “knew or should have known” that a lessee is misusing the premises and “failed to prevent the lessee from doing so” is well beyond the simplistic concept that a property owner or manager “knows all and sees all” in every tenant’s situation. This section must be reviewed to balance what can be done in these instances.

Pages 19, Lines 33-Pg. 20 Lines 1-14 regarding certain “statuses of possible tenants”, is also drafted in a way that ties the hands of property owners to access any information about prospective tenants-regardless of their immigration status or citizenship. For over 20 years Baltimore has been a place where refugee services such as the International Rescue Committee and Global Refuge have worked to resettle their clients with the City’s property owners, in fact Regional Management, Inc. has worked with both groups the entire time. However, this section, as drafted, will impede not only that work, but it places the property owner in an impossible posture if they are subject to a subpoena or other enforcement scenario that this situation contemplates. This section must be reworked.

Page 26, Lines 4-13 – This section indicates that the Department aggregated for ALL licensed dwellings in the City. This is potentially a help for the Department’s statistics, however this section should have some informational guidelines for the types of information they are keeping both for 3-1-1 complaints and citations (i.e. category minor issues vs. major issues)

Page 28, lines 16-17 and line 26 - Clarification for grounds before a “receivership” can begin must be clarified. Words such as “CITATIONS”, “UNABATED” are often “catch all” language and must be shown to be grounds for doing a receivership.

Page 34-36, Lines 8-33 -This Section would require entities that own rental properties in the City to disclose extensive information about the entity’s officers, members, partners, and beneficial owners, including their names, residences and business addresses, and depending on the entity type, as a condition of obtaining a rental license. It seeks information about equity owners who have no liability for the entity’s obligations, and fundamentally misunderstands the nature of modern business entities.

The critical problem with the Bill’s requirements is that stockholders of corporations, limited partners of limited partnerships, and members of limited liability companies generally have no personal liability for the debts and obligations of the entity. Passive equity owners **are not** the individuals making operational decisions about the rental properties, nor are they the individuals with whom the City would need to communicate regarding the rental properties.

Furthermore, this Bill provides that the Commissioner “shall be notified within 10 days of any change in the identity of or contact information for the owner of record or any other person listed in the registration statement.” This requirement demonstrates a fundamental misunderstanding of how ownership interests in business entities function. Typically, corporate owners are represented

by freely transferable stock. Stockholders may buy and sell shares without notifying the corporation, and the corporation often has no contemporaneous knowledge of such transfers. This is also true with membership interests in LLCs and partnership interests. Moreover, there is no mechanism under Maryland law requiring stockholders, limited partners, or LLC members to notify the entity of transfers of their interests within any particular timeframe. Thus, a ten-day reporting window for changes in ownership information is simply unworkable.

Moreover, Maryland statutes do not require disclosure of this type of information, thus making this Bill's disclosure requirements dramatically more expansive than anything the State requires of business entities.

Notably, none of Maryland's statutes governing the formation and operation of corporations, limited liability companies, limited partnerships, or other limited liability entities require those entities to disclose to the State the identities of their officers, directors, stockholders, partners, or members, much less their personal residence addresses.

The Maryland General Assembly has evidently determined that such information is not necessary for any legitimate regulatory concern. MMHA and RMI believe that Baltimore City should reach the same conclusion regarding this Proposed Bill. *See* Maryland General Corporation Law, Md. Code Ann., Corps. & Ass'ns, Titles 1 through 3; Maryland Limited Liability Company Act (Title 4A, Corps. & Ass'ns Article); Maryland Uniform Limited Partnership Act (Title 10, Corps. & Ass'ns Article); and Maryland Uniform Partnership Act (Title 9A, Corps. & Ass'ns Article).

The proposed Bill assumes that entities can readily identify their "ultimate beneficial owners", but Maryland law imposes no obligation on entities to maintain this information. While a corporation must maintain a stock ledger, that ledger reflects only the record holders of the corporation's shares, not the beneficial owners—shares may be held by brokers, custodians, or nominees on behalf of beneficial owners whose identities are unknown to the corporation. In addition access to the stock ledger is restricted under Section 2-513 of the MGCL. This restriction reflects the General Assembly's judgment that ownership information is sensitive and should not be broadly disclosed. The same principles apply to LLCs and limited partnerships, which have no statutory obligation to know the identities of the natural persons who ultimately own their membership interests.

MMHA, RMI and all of the members of MMHA's Legislative's Committee look forward to discussing these matters in detail with the Council.

Respectfully Submitted:


Katherine Kelly Howard, Esq.
MMHA Legislative Co-Chair
General Counsel for Regional Management, Inc.
410 539 2370
Khoward@regionalmgmt.com

Good Evening

Thousands of Landlords and Inspectors in our network take strong exception to the proposed legislation for which you are sponsoring regarding new housing/rental license regulations. Landlords pay the majority of property taxes in the city and often are treated with disrespect and touted as being the ill of everything that is wrong within city limits. Have you or your staff taken the time to attend Rent Court, or summary ejection proceedings? I would encourage you and your staff to do so. I'm sure you are familiar with the infamous DC squatter case that was recently in the news, where a professional Tenant took over the owner's property in several subsequent squatting episodes, even resorting to setting one of the units on fire to have an excuse to avoid eviction. Better still, the case in Baltimore where a Tenant was moving toward eviction and went to a court commissioner and obtained a protection order on two separate occasions under false pretenses against the landlord, both of which were dismissed by a judge after a hearing. She then concocted a story stating that the landlord burglarized her apartment, assaulted her put a "gun to her head" and "tore her clothing off" The landlord was of course arrested, jailed, fired from his job, lost custody of his children... for all charges to be dismissed in court and found to be deceptive fabrication. What was even more ironic, is that this tenant was later convicted after trial of assault on this very same landlord she had falsely accused. Baltimore City now faces a multi-million-dollar lawsuit in US federal court regarding the false arrest and constitutional violations of the landlord in the case mentioned above. The legislation your proposing would exponentially put the city at risk for the same.

The proposed measures, while framed as tenant-protection reforms, represent a sweeping and punitive expansion of governmental power over private property that dangerously erodes due process, property rights, and basic principles of proportionality. Rather than targeting demonstrably unlawful conduct through existing enforcement mechanisms, this proposal presumes bad faith on the part of landlords as a class and substitutes broad administrative discretion for individualized judicial findings. Such an approach risks punishing compliance alongside noncompliance and undermines confidence in fair and neutral governance.

The creation of a **Rental Licensing Receivership** regime is particularly troubling. Authorizing DHCD to haul property owners into court and place their properties into receivership—potentially leading to forced sale—amounts to a quasi-civil forfeiture system cloaked as housing enforcement. Receivership has historically been reserved for extraordinary circumstances involving insolvency or abandonment, not as a routine regulatory cudgel. This mechanism invites abuse, strips owners of meaningful control over their property without adequate procedural safeguards, and creates perverse incentives for the government and receivers who stand to profit from prolonged control and eventual sale.

The requirement that DHCD audit between **100 and 200 licenses annually** to root out alleged fraud is similarly overbroad and misguided. Audits premised on vague suspicions of “fraudulent document filings” risk becoming fishing expeditions rather than targeted enforcement actions grounded in probable cause. This policy implicitly assumes widespread dishonesty without empirical support and diverts limited resources away from addressing actual health and safety

hazards in favor of bureaucratic box-checking that disproportionately burdens small and minority landlords.

Preventing the issuance or renewal of rental licenses solely because a **water bill is unpaid** is an irrational and punitive linkage that bears little relation to habitability or tenant safety. Water billing disputes are common, often contested, and may arise from errors for which the city is famous for, delayed payments by tenants, or municipal billing failures. Conditioning licensure on payment status transforms a civil utility dispute into a regulatory death sentence, effectively shutting down lawful rental operations without regard to fault, intent, or actual living conditions.

While no one disputes that intimidation and threats—particularly those invoking immigration enforcement—are reprehensible, the provision allowing license revocation based on alleged intimidation raises serious due process concerns. Without stringent evidentiary standards, clear definitions, and meaningful opportunities for defense, this measure invites false or exaggerated accusations to be weaponized in landlord-tenant disputes. Regulatory punishment must be based on adjudicated facts, not untested allegations, especially when the consequence is economic ruin.

The mandate restricting landlords' ability to reuse the same third-party rental inspector across renewal cycles purports to address conflicts of interest, yet it does so through arbitrary numerical limits rather than evidence of actual misconduct. Long-standing professional relationships do not inherently imply corruption; indeed, continuity often results in greater compliance and familiarity with property conditions. Please note, four renewal cycles could result in as long as 10 years. Forcing rotation for its own sake increases costs, delays renewals, and injects inconsistency into inspections, all while failing to address the real issue: the adequacy of inspection standards and oversight. As an inspector, I have found that in cases where a dwelling should not have had a license, more often than not, the owner has falsified the documentation, by simply printing the required form from the internet and signing the inspector's signature and submitting it to DHCD. My colleagues and I brought the issue of high likelihood of fraudulent documentation and the need for a closed system to the attention of the leadership of Baltimore Department of Housing and Community Development back in 2019, but it was ignored.

Taken together, these proposals reflect a regulatory philosophy that favors coercion over collaboration, punishment over compliance, and optics over outcomes. They risk destabilizing the rental market, discouraging responsible ownership, and reducing the availability of affordable housing—precisely the opposite of their stated intent. Meaningful housing reform requires targeted enforcement of existing laws, robust due process protections, and policies that distinguish between truly egregious actors and the vast majority of landlords striving to comply in an increasingly hostile regulatory environment.

<u>Name</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>PostalCode</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>SignedOn</u>
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Shawn Luger	Rockville	MD	20852	United States	4/27/26
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Jason Bellin	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	4/27/26
Nicole Orr	Baltimore	MD	21223	United States	4/27/26
ed Healey	White Marsh	MD	21162	United States	4/27/26
Ryan Rotondo	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	4/27/26
Darrell Jackson	Baltimore	MD	21215	United States	4/27/26
John Twearthy	Baltimore	MD	21213	United States	4/27/26
Walter Rivera	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/27/26
Matt LoSignor	Bel Air	MD	21015	United States	4/27/26
Kory Mitchell	Baltimore	MD	21231	United States	4/27/26
Angie DeLuca	Baltimore	MD	21214	United States	4/27/26
Thomas Chroniger	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/27/26
Ned Carey	Baltimore	MD	21214	United States	4/27/26
Simmy Vanderhoof	Baltimore	MD	21217	United States	4/27/26
Richard Beck	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	4/27/26
mike Kulyk	Baltimore	MD	21214	United States	4/27/26
Aaron Murphy	Baltimore	MD	21222	United States	4/27/26
Joshua Parker	Baltimore	MD	21231	United States	4/27/26
Ela Cossis	Baltimore	MD	21226	United States	4/27/26
Michael David	Ellicott City	MD	21043	United States	4/27/26
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Arash Soluti	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/27/26
Yulia Tremaskina	Eldersburg	MD	21784	United States	4/27/26
Mahnaz shahinfar	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/27/26
Ace Soluti	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/27/26
Eric b	Baltimore	MD	21231	United States	4/27/26
Forrest woelfel	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/27/26
Jean Pierre Assaad	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/27/26
Travis Shaw	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	4/27/26
Elie Assaad	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	4/27/26
Nina Glose	Baltimore	MD	21211	United States	4/27/26
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Ozden Sirimsi	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	4/27/26
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Parthenia Richardson	Springfield	VA	22153	United States	4/27/26
Stephanie Miller	Baltimore	MD	21215	United States	4/27/26
Marc Stallings	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	4/27/26
Emile baaklini	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	4/27/26
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Mike Williams	Baltimore	MD	21231	United States	4/27/26
Youssef Salloum	Ellicott City	MD	21043	United States	4/27/26
Fatima wilkerson	Baltimore	MD	21206	United States	4/27/26
Wes Reintzel	Saint Leonard	MD	20685	United States	4/27/26
John Stockton	Baltimore	MD	21231	United States	4/27/26
Elaine Evans	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	4/27/26
Mr. Brown	Baltimore	MD	21217	United States	4/27/26
Shev Ross	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	4/27/26
Roudabeh Danesh	columbia	MD	21044	United States	4/27/26
Rakesh Raghuvanshi	Baltimore	MD	21202	United States	4/27/26
Jahmai Nicome	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	4/27/26
zachary cecit	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	4/27/26
Eric Washington	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	4/27/26
Christian Curry	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	4/27/26
Shanae Brock	Baltimore	MD	21206	United States	4/27/26
Thomas Kane III	Baltimore	MD	21212	United States	4/27/26
Francesca Galasso	Towson	MD	21286	United States	4/27/26
Cathy Galasso	Timonium	MD	21093	United States	4/27/26
Marta jolesz	Baltimore	MD	21202	United States	4/27/26
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Donte Vaughn	Woodlawn	MD	21244	United States	4/27/26
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Jimmy Vong	Towson	MD	21286	United States	4/27/26
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Randy Lusk	Finksburg	MD	21048	United States	4/27/26
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Alicia Corson	Towson	MD	21204	United States	4/27/26
Peter onouha	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	4/28/26
Martina Holland	Baltimore	MD	21217	United States	4/28/26
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Renee Dailey	Baltimore	MD	21217	United States	4/28/26
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Nikkia Pompey	Baltimore	MD	21206	United States	4/28/26
Heather Clark	Stevensville	MD	21666	United States	4/28/26
Denise Uhrin	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Joe Zimmerman	Baltimore	MD	21212	United States	4/28/26
Joshua Welck	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Joy Sushinsky	Baltimore	MD	21211	United States	4/28/26
Michael Zabora	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Mary Jo Whelan	Baltimore	MD	21234	United States	4/28/26
Kimberly Lally	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Derek DeRossett	Street	MD	21154	United States	4/28/26
John Maranto	Towson	MD	21204	United States	4/28/26
Jill wootten	Alpharetta	GA	30022	United States	4/28/26
Annie Welck	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Dawn Fender	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Joseph DeSimone	Baltimore	MD	21213	United States	4/28/26
Patricia Ourand	Baltimore	MD	21202	United States	4/28/26
Marta LOPUSHANSKA	Baltimore	MD	21117	United States	4/28/26
Brian CHANCE	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
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Joanne Christina	Reisterstown	MD	21136	United States	4/28/26
Ellen Cherry	Baltimore	MD	21231	United States	4/28/26
Richard Saltos	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	4/28/26
Andrew Lehr	Phoenix	MD	21131	United States	4/28/26
James Stephens	Perry Hall	MD	21128	United States	4/28/26
RASHELLE THOMAS	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Mary Anne Long	Finksburg	MD	21048	United States	4/28/26
Jennifer De La Rosa	Columbia	MD	21044	United States	4/28/26
Judy Specht	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Anthony Pace	Baltimore	MD	21216	United States	4/28/26
Christian Olson	Baltimore	MD	21211	United States	4/28/26
Laura Koch	Phoenix	MD	21131	United States	4/28/26
Michael Schwartz	Baltimore	MD	21211	United States	4/28/26
Scott Mogol	Baltimore	MD	21211	United States	4/28/26
Scott Serafin	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	4/28/26
Jake Northrop	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Todd Mummert	Phoenix	MD	21131	United States	4/28/26
Marcie Prince	Baltimore	MD	21211	United States	4/28/26
Sam sterner	Catonsville	MD	21228	United States	4/28/26
Zahra Tehrani	Baltimore	MD	21202	United States	4/28/26
Sydney Shapiro	Parkville	MD	21234	United States	4/28/26
Amanda Bourgeois	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Heather Wilhelm-Kirby	Baltimore	MD	21211	United States	4/28/26
GABRIELEHRLICH	Cockeysville	MD	21030	United States	4/28/26
Eliza yang	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Austin Seivold	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Sean Hutchens	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Shannon Toback	Baltimore	MD	21223	United States	4/28/26
Kelly Knock	Baltimore	MD	21215	United States	4/28/26
Richard Gaines	Owings Mills	MD	21117	United States	4/28/26
Max Spitalny	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Nader Sadighi	Bethesda	MD	20814	United States	4/28/26
Tyler Haight	Jarrettsville	MD	21084	United States	4/28/26
Gillian Seivold	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Mary Lovewell	Sanford	FL	32771	United States	4/28/26
Marianne Mehrer	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Jessica Mariano	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	4/28/26
KENNETH COLEMAN	Baltimore	MD	21216	United States	4/28/26
Anna Coleman	Reisterstown	MD	21136	United States	4/28/26
Mark Lee	Baltimore	MD	21204	United States	4/28/26
David Jimenez	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Tanara Faustich	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Adam Chamy	Baltimore	MD	21202	United States	4/28/26
Bradley Gallagher	Baltimore	MD	21202	United States	4/28/26
Austin Carroll	Towson	MD	21204	United States	4/28/26
Maryam Asadi	Rockville	MD	20850	United States	4/28/26
Lisa Ciofani	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Shawn Krause	Lutherville	MD	21093	United States	4/28/26
Jamie Walker	Baltimore	MD	21209	United States	4/28/26
Kelly McDevitt	Baltimore	MD	21206	United States	4/28/26
somayeh karimi	Rockville	MD	20886	United States	4/28/26
Chantai Wilkes	Laurel	MD	20708	United States	4/28/26
Lawrence Walsky	Riva	MD	21140	United States	4/28/26
Rebecca Hall	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/28/26
Kate Barnhart	Baltimore	MD	21214	United States	4/28/26
Audrey Harwood	Bel Air	MD	21014	United States	4/28/26
Craig Harwood	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	4/28/26
Donna Palmer	Baltimore	MD	21212	United States	4/28/26
Nick Kalfas	Northingham	MD	21236	United States	4/28/26
Brendan Huff	Dumfries	VA	22025	United States	4/28/26
Debbie E	Felton	DE	19943	United States	4/28/26
Douglas Johnson	Halethorpe	MD	21227	United States	4/28/26
Donald Beecher	White Marsh	MD	21162	United States	4/28/26
Daniel Stebbins	Baltimore	MD	21209	United States	4/28/26
Kelli Shockey	Eldersburg	MD	21784	United States	4/28/26
Alfredo Cumerma	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	4/28/26
Jack Hinder	Baltimore	MD	21212	United States	4/28/26
Ryan Lovewell	Baltimore	MD	21204	United States	4/28/26
Susan Myers	Catonsville	MD	21228	United States	4/28/26
Peter M Perez	Baltimore	MD	21205	United States	4/28/26
MegMcFadden	Baltimore	MD	21286	United States	4/28/26
Stacy Hardy	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	4/28/26
Shafi Uddin	Towson	MD	21204	United States	4/29/26
Sinead Nyhan	Baltimore	MD	21202	United States	4/29/26
Bernard Young	Baltimore	MD	21202	United States	4/29/26
Courtney Byrnes	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/29/26
Kelsey Hurson	Baltimore	MD	21206	United States	4/29/26
John James	Berlin	MD	21811	United States	4/29/26
Angela Hinder	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/29/26
Felix Bauer	Baltimore	MD	21231	United States	4/29/26
Sam Tabler	Catonsville	MD	21228	United States	4/29/26
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Cheltis McMillan	Baltimore	MD	21231	United States	4/29/26
Kurt Dunn	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/29/26
Edith Pula	Baltimore	MD	21231	United States	4/29/26
Maria Hernandez	Aurora	CO	80010	United States	4/29/26
Katie Griss	Arbutus	MD	21227	United States	4/29/26
Tim Porterfield	Timonium	MD	21093	United States	4/29/26
Brian Hensley	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	4/29/26
Callie Kane	Baltimore	MD	21216	United States	4/29/26
Kali Hunter	East York	PA	17402	United States	4/29/26
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Brian Hensley Jr.	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	4/29/26
Ruth Fernandes	Monroe	NC	28110	United States	4/29/26
Eden Noe	Baltimore	MD	21231	United States	4/29/26
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B Proctor	Washington	DC	20019	United States	4/29/26

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William Edwards	Washington		20001	United States	4/29/26
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Trenessa Annibal	Baltimore	MD	21216	United States	4/29/26
Richard Negri	Parkville	MD	21234	United States	4/29/26
Quincy Agard	Washington	DC	20019	United States	4/29/26
Alaiya Johnson	Forestville	MD	20747	United States	4/29/26
Sara O'Malley	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/29/26
Anita Hook	Catonsville	MD	21228	United States	4/29/26
Anaesia Meekins	Richmond	VA	23225	United States	4/29/26
Kenneth Koehler	Baltimore	MD	21231	United States	4/29/26
Kathryn Klein	Baltimore	MD	21231	United States	4/29/26
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Elijah Henderson	Waldorf	MD	20603	United States	4/29/26
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Frank Prentice	Upper Darby		19082	United States	4/29/26
Laurie Rush	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	4/30/26
Suping Wang	Rockville	MD	20850	United States	4/30/26
Brooke Clyde	White Marsh	MD	21236	United States	4/30/26
Trina Mobley	Washington	DC	20020	United States	4/30/26
Scott Lawrence	Baltimore	MD	21213	United States	4/30/26
Ashley Stearns	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/30/26
Asruse Misikir	Lanham	MD	20706	United States	4/30/26
lambert corcoran	Baltimore	MD	21211	United States	4/30/26
Monyea Hawkins	Washington	DC	20011	United States	4/30/26
Amy Keitt	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/30/26
Amare Haile	Lancaster	PA	17601	United States	4/30/26
Sal Criscuolo	staten island	NY	20149	United States	4/30/26
Jeffrey Powell	Red Lion	PA	17356	United States	4/30/26
Kimberly Johnson	Washington	DC	20011	United States	4/30/26
Phillippe Tchoye	Sterling	VA	20167	United States	4/30/26
Gail Robertson	Bel Air North	MD	21050	United States	4/30/26
Bobby geppi	Pasadena	MD	21122	United States	4/30/26
GAGAN kandhari	Glen Burnie	MD	21061	United States	4/30/26
Dan Drechsler	Arbutus	MD	21227	United States	4/30/26
Natalia Rojas	Zipaquir			Colombia	4/30/26
Margaret DeCampo	Baltimore	MD	21201	United States	4/30/26
Johnny Engles	Linthicum Heights	MD	21090	United States	4/30/26
Steve Miller	Catonsville	MD	21228	United States	4/30/26
Seth Blanken	Owings Mills	MD	21117	United States	4/30/26
B Dyson	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/30/26
malaila lewis	hinesville	GA	31313	United States	4/30/26
Erica Roop	York	PA	17404	United States	4/30/26
Mark McDonough	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	4/30/26
Bard Stebbins	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	4/30/26
Russell Cordner	Maheim	PA	17545	United States	4/30/26
Mitra Nasari	College Park	MD	20740	United States	5/1/26
Rhys Adkins	Ashburn	VA	20149	United States	5/1/26
Biruk Debebe	Washington	DC	20019	United States	5/1/26
Gina Sanders	Reisterstown	MD	21136	United States	5/1/26
Imani Lincicome	Silver Spring	MD	20902	United States	5/1/26
Lisa DuBois	Newark	DE	19702	United States	5/1/26
Camelle MATSINKU	Germantown	MD	20874	United States	5/1/26
Juan Brown	Baltimore	MD	21217	United States	5/1/26
Daryl Fryer	Catonsville	MD	21228	United States	5/1/26
CARL ROBINSON	Baltimore	MD	21206	United States	5/1/26
Kenneth Ivaentich	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	5/1/26
jen johnson	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	5/1/26
Paul Karanam	Millersville	MD	21108	United States	5/1/26
Anthony Wagstaff	Baltimore	MD	21215	United States	5/1/26
Michael Kisner	Essex	MD	21221	United States	5/1/26
Nicole Martinez	baltimore	MD	21214	United States	5/1/26
Robert Dietzen	Baltimore	MD	21206	United States	5/1/26
Robert Craney	Ellicott City	MD	21042	United States	5/1/26
Edward Berlett	Arnold	MD	21012	United States	5/1/26
Timothy Jacob	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	5/1/26
Aravindan Veerasamy	Baltimore	MD	21212	United States	5/1/26
Kowfi Dorman El	Baltimore	MD	21215	United States	5/1/26
Darien Woodland	Baltimore	MD	21217	United States	5/1/26
Michael Daniel	Ellicott City	MD	21043	United States	5/1/26
D Spratling	District Heights	MD	20747	United States	5/1/26
Julie Dastvan	Germantown	MD	20874	United States	5/1/26
Freddie Powell	Lutherville	MD	21093	United States	5/1/26
Vicki White	Baltimore	MD	21222	United States	5/1/26
Darlene Thornton	Waldorf	MD	20602	United States	5/1/26
CLAYTON WILLIAMS SR	WINDSOR MILL,MD	MD	21244	United States	5/1/26
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Asish Balu	Brooklyn	NY	11249	United States	5/1/26
Brandon Jones	Milford Mill	MD	21244	United States	5/1/26
Devin Monroe	Baltimore	MD	21244	United States	5/1/26
Joseph DiMaggio	Baltimore	MD	21214	United States	5/1/26
Malcome X	Fairfax	VA	22038	United States	5/1/26
NECOL BROWN	Baltimore	MD	21217	United States	5/1/26
Giselle Richards	Cheverly	MD	20785	United States	5/1/26
MICHAEL KOLEINI	Baltimore	MD	21217	United States	5/1/26
Sue Pilcher	Baltimore	MD	21222	United States	5/1/26
Kassa Zeleke	Centreville	VA	20120	United States	5/1/26
Furman Dennis JR	York	PA	17403	United States	5/1/26
Shelba stanford	Abingdon	MD	21009	United States	5/1/26
Chris Thomas	Rosedale	MD	21237	United States	5/1/26
Charles Edwards	Joppatowne	MD	21085	United States	5/1/26
Felipe Stefanoni	Abingdon	MD	21009	United States	5/1/26
Jonathan Gaitan	Manassas	VA	20110	United States	5/1/26
Robert B Jones	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	5/2/26
Faith Bily	Richmond	VA	23282	United States	5/2/26
Tigst Abebe	Washington	DC	20068	United States	5/2/26
Noellia Martinez	Vancouver	WA	98662	United States	5/2/26
Soroush Dowlatshahi	Manassas	VA	20109	United States	5/2/26
Robert Gambill	Towson	MD	21286	United States	5/2/26

<u>Name</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>PostalCode</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>SignedOn</u>
Amira Bradley	Baltimore	MD	21215	United States	5/2/26
Nicholas Poppe	Severn	MD	21144	United States	5/2/26
Leslie Ketterman	Burlington	WV	26710	United States	5/2/26
Salvatore Catalfamo	Cockeysville	MD	21030	United States	5/2/26
Tom Karle	Fallston	MD	21047	United States	5/2/26
Domenic Catalfamo	Reisterstown	MD	21136	United States	5/2/26
Faisal Morsi	Baldwin	MD	21013	United States	5/2/26
Claire Hammer	Baltimore	MD	21212	United States	5/2/26
Daniel Batkhan	Baltimore	MD	21209	United States	5/2/26
Fathima Rajap	Essex	MD	21221	United States	5/2/26
Karen Mull	Curtis Bay	MD	21226	United States	5/2/26
clifton ryan	Baltimore	MD	21214	United States	5/2/26
Ann King	Middle River	MD	21220	United States	5/2/26
Kimberly Eberwein	Baltimore	MD	21234	United States	5/2/26
Ava Culbreath	Linden	TN	37069	United States	5/2/26
Christine Wolking				United States	5/2/26
Liudmila Lushina	Wilmington	DE	19808	United States	5/3/26
Make Some Intelligent Noise	Wilmington	DE	19720	United States	5/3/26
Lisa Jones	Washington	DC	20011	United States	5/3/26
Seantele Ward	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	5/3/26
Shawn Schneider	Baltimore	MD	21227	United States	5/3/26
Robin Dahlka				United States	5/3/26
George Dangerfield	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	5/3/26
John Briner	Lancaster	PA	17601	United States	5/3/26
Orion Lord	Silver Spring	MD	21224	United States	5/3/26
Sonia Colon	Baltimore	MD	21217	United States	5/3/26
Dorothy Harris	Glen Burnie	MD	21060	United States	5/3/26
Russell Robinson	Oroville	CA	95928	United States	5/3/26
Ana DeVincents	Townsend	DE	19734	United States	5/3/26
Thomas Logue	Jarrettsville	MD	21084	United States	5/3/26
Shelby A	Forest Hill	MD	21050	United States	5/3/26
Anne Barrett	New Providence	PA	17960	United States	5/4/26
Tamara Benvengi	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	5/4/26
Roy Bond	Baltimore	MD	21205	United States	5/4/26
Maria Paul	Frederick	MD	21704	United States	5/4/26
Lauren DiMartino	Baltimore	MD	21213	United States	5/4/26
Jason Kolomick	Jacobus	PA	17407	United States	5/4/26
robin windsor	Severn	MD	21144	United States	5/4/26
BINYAM GEBREYES	Washington	DC	20011	United States	5/4/26
Gregory Walker	Baltimore	MD	21229	United States	5/4/26
Harvey Livingston	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	5/4/26
Aaron Moskovitz	Baltimore	MD	21229	United States	5/4/26
Verngina Smith	Suitland-Silver Hill	MD	20746	United States	5/4/26
Jim Pettjohn	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	5/4/26
Charles Hoffman	Baltimore	MD	21229	United States	5/4/26
Camille Rodriguez	Frederick	MD	21701	United States	5/4/26
Diane Honeycutt	Potomac	MD	20854	United States	5/4/26
Kateryna Shvets	Tysons	VA	22102	United States	5/5/26
Shaguffa Kosar	Centreville	VA	20121	United States	5/5/26
connor ritchey	Fallston	MD	21047	United States	5/5/26
Darnell Leake	Baltimore	MD	21215	United States	5/5/26
Paul Thompson	Millersville	MD	21108	United States	5/5/26
Chad Smith	Huntingtown	MD	20639	United States	5/5/26
Syd Miller	Leavenworth	WA	98826	United States	5/5/26
Janice James-Watson	Lanham	MD	20706	United States	5/5/26
Sandra Sales	Baltimore	MD	21231	United States	5/5/26
Mary Jansen				United States	5/5/26
Terry Haggerty	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	5/5/26
Etham Nadali	Vienna	VA	22180	United States	5/5/26
Jessica Brown	Edgemere	MD	21219	United States	5/5/26
Robert F Wozniak	Edgemere	MD	21219	United States	5/5/26
Robert Levine Jr	Edgemere	MD	21219	United States	5/5/26
Kenneth Wozniak	Washington	DC	20002	United States	5/5/26
Lisa Winnett	Baltimore	MD	21205	United States	5/5/26
Frances Prodoehl	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	5/5/26
sabrina stevens	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	5/5/26
isaac bias	Baltimore	MD	21201	United States	5/5/26
Eduardo Mendes	Baltimore	MD	21202	United States	5/5/26
Yehuda Blasenstein	Baltimore	MD	21202	United States	5/5/26
Emellie Rochelin	New York	NY	11216	United States	5/5/26
Davian Jones	Edgemere	MD	21219	United States	5/5/26
maggie bobo	hiram	GA	30141	United States	5/5/26
Tanya McNew-Foulke	Edgemere	MD	21219	United States	5/5/26
Brandon Frank	Lorton		22079	United States	5/5/26
Antonio Scotto	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	5/5/26
cody lowry	Locust Grove	GA	30248	United States	5/5/26
Jennifer meszaros	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	5/5/26
Greg Marks	Abingdon	MD	21009	United States	5/5/26
Jenna Coburn	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	5/5/26
Courtney Szafarz	Edgemere	MD	21219	United States	5/5/26
Dana Borman	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	5/5/26
Eric Driscoll	Sparrows Point	MD	21219	United States	5/5/26
Paula Peters	Baltimore	MD	21237	United States	5/5/26
Debbie Bolyard	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	5/5/26
David Robinson	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	5/5/26
Kim Blubaugh	Middle River	MD	21220	United States	5/5/26
donald Miller	Baltimore	MD	21228	United States	5/6/26
Cindy Furman	Edgemere	MD	21219	United States	5/6/26
Natalie Kautz	Celina	TX	75009	United States	5/6/26
Lisa Dodge	Edgemere	MD	21219	United States	5/6/26
Judy Iman	Sparrows Point	MD	21219	United States	5/6/26
Tyasha Shaw	Baltimore	MD	21212	United States	5/6/26
Daniel Clark	Edgemere	MD	21052	United States	5/6/26
Trevor Clemons				United States	5/6/26
Jocelyn Petcholan	Essex	MD	21221	United States	5/6/26
Fu Chen	Columbia	MD	21044	United States	5/6/26
NATASHA SHARIF	Purcellville	VA	20132	United States	5/6/26
Bai Bai	Rockville	MD	20850	United States	5/6/26
Barbara Fagan	Columbia	MD	21044	United States	5/6/26
Elizabeth Gorman	Elkton	MD	21921	United States	5/6/26
Celia Balzer	Columbia	MD	21044	United States	5/6/26

<u>Name</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>PostalCode</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>SignedOn</u>
Eric Taylor	Sparrows point	MD	21219	United States	5/6/26
Erma Ellis-Stewart	Washington	DC	20017	United States	5/6/26
Vincent Baylor	Bowie	MD	20721	United States	5/6/26
Dara Worrell	Arnold	MD	21012	United States	5/6/26
Ryan Keener	Sparrows Point	MD	21219	United States	5/6/26
Barbara Sprinkel	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	5/6/26
Nicholas Vaeth	Nottingham	MD	21236	United States	5/6/26
Sera Morris	Ashburn	VA	20149	United States	5/6/26
Laura Vaeth	Orlando	FL	32837	United States	5/7/26
Calvin Price				United States	5/7/26
Arthur Cooper	Baltimore	MD	21213	United States	5/7/26
Nicole Derosa	Baltimore	MD	21202	United States	5/7/26
Connie Horan	Essex	MD	21052	United States	5/7/26
Josh Minnigh	Odenton	MD	21113	United States	5/7/26
Keith Tunnell	New Castle	DE	19720	United States	5/7/26
Arianna jones	Gwynn Oak	MD	21207	United States	5/7/26
Amy Delvalle	Balto	MD	21219	United States	5/7/26
Brianna Watson	Washington	DC	20017	United States	5/7/26
Alan Rivas	Baltimore	MD	21217	United States	5/7/26
Robin Jenkins	Baltimore	MD	21223	United States	5/7/26
Donna Sproles	Essex	MD	21221	United States	5/7/26
Alix Furini	Baltimore	VA	24501	United States	5/7/26
Shannon Keith	Havre De Grace	MD	21078	United States	5/7/26
Todd Petrik		MD		United States	5/7/26
Eric King	Washington	DC	20019	United States	5/7/26
Melissa Maher	Germantown	MD	20874	United States	5/8/26
Carlo Vignotto	Essex	MD	21221	United States	5/8/26
Katherine Bonnell	Silver Spring	MD	20904	United States	5/8/26
Don Antwon Smith	Alexandria	VA	22309	United States	5/8/26
Josie Porterfield	Merritt Island	FL	32953	United States	5/8/26
Alison Osborne	Perry Hall	MD	21128	United States	5/8/26
Moses Spitz	Baltimore	MD	21201	United States	5/8/26
Kirk pietsch	Bel Air	MD	21014	United States	5/8/26
Davon Trowell	Hillcrest Heights	MD	20748	United States	5/8/26
Alex Newcomb	Columbia	MD	21045	United States	5/8/26
Fran Costello	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	5/8/26
Bob Billy	Aberdeen	MI	21001	United States	5/8/26
James Haran	Eldersburg	MD	21784	United States	5/8/26
Gregory Mitas	Glen Burnie	MD	21060	United States	5/8/26
John Rolfes	Reisterstown	MD	21136	United States	5/9/26
Neal Teitelbaum	Westminster	MD	21157	United States	5/9/26
Oksana Cobb	Rockville	MD	20852	United States	5/9/26
Matthew Stutzman	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	5/9/26
Bella Kontsevaya	Baltimore	MD	21229	United States	5/9/26
Mohamed Abuzeid	Bear	DE	19701	United States	5/9/26
Thaddeus Harrington	New York	MD	21207	United States	5/9/26
Steve Crouch	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	5/9/26
Patricia Roberts-Graston	Odenton	MD	21113	United States	5/9/26
Devon Potter	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	5/9/26
Daniela Alely Navarrete Sanchez	Baltimore	MD	21218	United States	5/9/26
Ruby Gelok	Mechanic sburg	PA	17055	United States	5/9/26
Ali Arya	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	5/9/26
Alan Barysh	Baltimore	MD	21209	United States	5/9/26
andy mobley	Deer Park	TX	77536	United States	5/10/26
Elizabeth Treasure	Glen Burnie	MD	21060	United States	5/10/26
Scott Bratvold	Arlington	VA	22204	United States	5/10/26
Nina Parsa	Fairfax	VA	22030	United States	5/10/26
Michael rotondo	Dundalk	MD	21222	United States	5/10/26
Matt Happick	Bel Air	MD	21014	United States	5/10/26
Madelin Martinez	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	5/10/26
Yan Feng	College Park	MD	20740	United States	5/10/26
Joshua Velte	Woodstock	MD	21163	United States	5/10/26
Pradeep Thadani	Baltimore	MD	21236	United States	5/10/26
Michael Donovan	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	5/10/26
Moshe Gholian	Pikesville	MD	21208	United States	5/10/26
Nick Diamond	Baltimore	MD	21209	United States	5/10/26
Sean Frye	Washington	DC	20011	United States	5/10/26
kishawna Warren	New York (and vicinity)	NY	11377	United States	5/11/26
Hazel Diaz	Washington	DC	20001	United States	5/11/26
Marie Christie Vitton	Baltimore	MD	21217	United States	5/11/26
Mike Rubin				United States	5/11/26
Lori Mack	Baltimore	MD	21215	United States	5/11/26
Victoria Maxwell	Upper Marlboro	MD	20774	United States	5/11/26
Mike Siu	Washington	DC	20011	United States	5/11/26
Maureen McDermitt	Silver Spring	MD	20902	United States	5/11/26
Vanda White	Laurel	MD	20724	United States	5/11/26
Rami tadros	Reisterstown	MD	21136	United States	5/11/26
Abdulio Molina	Bradenton	FL	34203	United States	5/11/26
Linh Ha	Baltimore	MD	21231	United States	5/11/26
Joe catrambone	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	5/11/26
Santos Nolasco	Essex	MD	21221	United States	5/11/26
Jake Schmelhing	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	5/11/26
Brandon Ortiz	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	5/11/26
Jill Carino	Valenzuela			Philippines	5/11/26
Vadim Shapiro	Elicott City	MD	21043	United States	5/11/26
Rick Norman	Philadelphia	PA	19104	United States	5/11/26
Reina Machado	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	5/12/26
Tanner White	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	5/12/26
Jess Bousa	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	5/12/26
Corrin Woodard	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	5/12/26
Laura Orlando	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	5/12/26
Jennifer Eastman	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	5/12/26
Leslie KirKland	Baltimore	MD	21224	United States	5/12/26
Robert Laudeman	West Chester	PA	19382	United States	5/12/26
Adam Dunkin	Towson	MD	21204	United States	5/12/26
Josh Nicodemus	Baltimore	MD	21230	United States	5/12/26

I am writing in support of The Rental Dwelling Safety and Enforcement Act. My husband and I live directly next door to an Airbnb. Three weeks ago, he was taking out our recycling and discovered broken pieces of pottery lying on top of the recycling inside of the can that we did not place there. He set about removing the pottery and was stuck by a needle that had been discarded improperly by a guest at the Airbnb the previous weekend and then by a housekeeper for the Airbnb. He went to the Emergency Department the next afternoon and had his blood drawn for HIV, Hepatitis B & C. He will return in another three weeks from this writing to ensure he has not contracted one of these infectious diseases. Despite our best efforts, we were unable to compel the guest to get a blood test. We worked with the host and Airbnb over many days to try to establish new and safer practices to prevent this sort of thing from happening again. Unfortunately, thus far we have not been able to know if any of our suggestions have been put into place. We suggested the following to the hosts: move their cans closer to the Airbnb and clearly mark them (the cans currently do not reside on the property), place a sharps/red needle box in the facility, include a clearly written policy regarding proper trash, recycling, and medical waste disposal with a monetary penalty should the policy be violated, educate the housekeeper as to the proper disposal of trash, recycling, and medical waste, and most importantly, apply/re-apply for a license with Baltimore City as there is no evidence of a current license as per a look up on the DHCD as well as a direct call to the agency.

Airbnb denied the claim submitted by the hosts and have refused to compel the hosts to comply with any of our suggestions. The hosts have been obstinate regarding our complaint and suggestions. As neighbors, what recourse do we have?

Feb. 24th, 2026
Robin Lee Jacobs
Baltimore City, MD



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF Bill 25-0141
Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act

TO: Chair Torrence and members of the Baltimore City Council Housing and Economic Development Committee

FROM: Robin L. Jacobs

My name is Robin L. Jacobs. I am a resident of Baltimore City District 12. I am submitting this testimony in support of Bill 25-0141, the Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act.

In addition to working on Baltimore City's housing issues as an attorney for more than fifteen years, I have been a renter in Baltimore City since I moved here in 2004. I strongly believe everyone deserves safe, habitable housing, and this bill will work toward making that possible for renters in Baltimore City.

By ensuring corporate transparency, this bill will make it easier for renters and their advocates to contact responsible parties. Currently, it can be incredibly difficult for most Baltimore renters to find that information.

This bill also provides a number of important oversight measures in the investigation and inspection process. The bill gives renters a voice in the Housing Department's investigation process, audits inspectors, and ensures independence of inspectors, providing important checks on the investigation and inspection processes. As noted recently in [this story](#) about a lead paint inspector, inaccurate housing inspections can lead to tragic, lifelong consequences for our children. Similar issues arise regularly for renters in housing inspections and investigations in Baltimore City, which can leave tenants in an impossible situation, unable to address uninhabitable conditions.

I also support the receivership provisions provided in the bill for when uninhabitable conditions are not remedied. Expanding this tool beyond vacant, abandoned properties will empower the Housing Department to prevent property deterioration in rental units.

For these reasons, **I respectfully urge Councilmembers to support Bill 25-0141, Rental Dwelling and Safety Enforcement Act.** Thank you for your time and consideration.

I am Rabbi Ruth Smith and I live in Baltimore City District 4.

I am in favor of Bill 25-0141. It is a bill that is needed in our city if we are to make sure that renters have the protections that they need. Our society is becoming more and more stratified. Those at the top know less and less about what happens to those at the bottom. As a Jew and as a Baltimorean I am committed to ensuring that those who have less income don't suffer because of their lack of visibility in the community. They are paying for their housing, so they should be able to demand the same consumer protections our society expects.

Torah says: ***V'ahvta L'reacha Comocha***: you shall love your neighbor as yourself. In this context it means that you should not allow your neighbor to be subjected to conditions to which you would not want to be subjected. I would ask the counselors to imagine themselves living in substandard conditions. Not only would it be bad for their health, it would be bad for their dignity.

It is true that we do have a law on the books that should prevent this deplorable situation. In 2018, Baltimore City council passed an ordinance requiring all rental dwelling units to be inspected and licensed, so that all rental housing would meet standards of safety and habitability. This law has created much-needed progress toward creating safe housing for all Baltimore City tenants, but loopholes and enforcement failures have left 50% of rental units unlicensed to date. Even when properties do get licensed, tenants in those units often face deplorable housing conditions. The policy changes in Bill 25-0141 are needed to strengthen the law, remove conflicts of interest, and provide for better public accountability and enforcement.

V'ahvta L'reacha Comocha, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. You, members of the City Council, would want and expect these protections for yourselves. I implore you to make sure they are provided for your neighbors.

Feb. 24, 2026

Testimony in support of Baltimore City Council Bill 25-0141 (Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act)

To: Housing and Economic Development Committee Chair James Torrence and Vice Chair Odette Ramos

From: Joan Jacobson

My name is Joan Jacobson. I am a resident of Lauraville in Councilmanic District 3 and have been a city property taxpayer for many decades.

I am also a former housing reporter for the Baltimore Evening Sun and the Baltimore Sun, where I wrote extensively about housing code enforcement and slumlords. I later authored several housing studies for the Abell Foundation on the city's vacant houses and its receivership program that turns neglected, vacant properties into new homes.

This bill, long overdue, is a modest start to finally improve the lives of Baltimore city tenants.

It will improve the requirements to disclose the people behind Limited Liability Corporations and other corporations and partnerships who own rental property.

It will create a formal tenant complaint process and make inspection documents public.

It will audit 100-200 licensed properties and make the audits public.

It will require the city to compensate tenants who are removed from a condemned property within 48 hours.

It will limit conflicts of interest between landlords and private inspectors hired by the city to examine licensed rental properties and hold those inspectors accountable if they pass a property inspection containing housing code violations.

It will ban discrimination against tenants based on immigration status.

It will allow the city's Department of Housing and Community Development to include derelict rental properties in the receivership program, which now only converts vacant single-family houses into rehabilitated homes.

These small upgrades in the city's dysfunctional system of aiding tenants and holding their landlords accountable are long delayed improvements to the lives of thousands of city residents. For those council members in favor of passing another City Council bill (25-0066), which would eliminate single family zoning city-wide and allow up to 4 units in every home (or 2 units in a recently offered amendment by the mayor), there will likely be thousands of new tenants in Baltimore's future. And they will certainly need the protections of City Council Bill 25-0141.

Feb. 24th, 2026
Julie Robin Solomon
Baltimore, MD 21231

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF Bill 25-0141
Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act

TO: Chair Torrence and members of the Baltimore City Council Housing and Economic Development Committee

FROM: Julie Robin Solomon

My name is Julie Robin Solomon. I have resided in Baltimore City District 13 for close to 40 years. I am submitting this testimony in support of Bill 25-0141, the Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act.

I am a member of JUJF, CASA, the ACLU, and Baltimore Indivisible. These organizations reflect my values, one of which is the idea that all residents of our city should live in safe and healthy housing. I know from personal experience as a psychiatric nurse and nurse practitioner in the city of Baltimore that not all our residents have safe housing. In the past I worked for the organization, People Encouraging People, as a registered nurse and case manager, mainly in West Baltimore. I had the opportunity to witness substandard rental housing that was infiltrated by mold, infested with rodents and insects, and lacked heat. My job was to try to get them into more suitable housing—but even then it was difficult to find rental housing that was not rodent-infested. We need to pass legislation, including Bill 25-0141--The Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act—that will hold landlords to higher standards of sanitation and safety, so that all our city residents can remain secure and healthy.

I thank all members of the Baltimore City Council Housing and Economic Development Committee for all your hard work in keeping our residents safe and sound. **I respectfully urge Councilmembers to support Bill 25-0141, Rental Dwelling and Safety Enforcement Act .**

February 24, 2026
Don Akchin
Baltimore, MD 21210

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF BILL 25-0141
Strengthening Renters' Safety Act

TO: Council President Cohen and members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM: Don Akchin

Ladies and Gentlemen of the City Council,

My name is Don Akchin. I am a Baltimore City resident and speak tonight on behalf of Jews United for Justice, a proud member of the Safe Homes Now Coalition.

In the book of Deuteronomy, which presents principles for living a moral life, we are told: *You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor.*

Baltimore City government has tried to set up systems that are impartial in disagreements between landlords and tenants — to balance the property rights of landowners with the rights of tenants to live in safe and decent housing. In 2019, this City Council made a law requiring all rental units to obtain a city license before a tenant moves in. Jews United for Justice was a member of the coalition that advocated for the passage of this law. After seven years of experience with this law, it is clear that this law alone is not enough to maintain that proper balance. Something is missing from the law. That something is accountability.

There needs to be accountability for landlords who choose to ignore the licensing law. According to current estimates, more than one third of rental properties in the city are still not licensed.

There needs to be accountability for landlords who expect rent payments for dwellings that violate City standards of health and safety.

There needs to be accountability for private housing inspectors who look the other way at obvious violations to curry favor with landlords.

There needs to be accountability for the Department of Housing and Community Development for enforcing the law in good faith, and with transparency, and with a process for hearing and acting on tenant complaints.

Safe Homes Now has worked with Councilmember Ramos, with tenants, and with DHCD to craft a bill that adds this needed accountability into the process, and thereby makes important steps toward righting the balance between landlords and tenants. Passing this bill, and enforcing it in good faith, will make a huge difference in the City's commitment to see that all its citizens live in safe and sanitary housing. It does not impact landlords who provide safe housing and abide by City laws. It does hold bad

actors accountable to meeting basic standards of safety and decency. It goes farther to ensure that residents of Baltimore can enjoy the right to live in homes that are safe and up to code. Thank you.

**JEWS UNITED
FOR JUSTICE**
THINK JEWISHLY. ACT LOCALLY.



**Testimony to the Housing and Economic Development Committee
25-0141 Rental Dwelling Safety and Enforcement Act
Position: Favorable**

February 18, 2026

Councilman James Torrance, Chair
Housing and Economic Development Committee
100 Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
cc: Members, Housing and Economic Development

Councilman Torrance and members of the committee:

I am writing today on behalf of Economic Action Maryland Fund to urge your favorable report on 25-0141, which overhauls the way rental inspections are conducted, and certain procedures for obtaining a valid Baltimore City rental license.

Economic Action is a statewide coalition of individuals and organizations that advances economic rights and equity for Maryland families through research, education, direct service, and advocacy. Our 12,500 supporters include consumer advocates, practitioners, and low-income and working families throughout Maryland.

We support this bill because we hear from too many tenants in Baltimore City who are living in substandard housing – 65 households in 2025 alone, yet the property was granted a rental license. Many inspections are done in a cursory fashion – with little to no attention paid to the critical areas that fail: electrical, plumbing, and mechanical systems, or structural issues. Requiring fair and unbiased inspections should be the rule, and not the exception. For 2026, we also have more than 25 clients who are living in substandard housing and the property was never inspected or licensed, with no consequences for the landlord.

While we understand the implementation of 25-0141 might push some landlords to sell their properties, we see this measure as a way to pave a new pathway for better, safer housing in Baltimore – for all tenants, regardless of ethnicity or immigration status. If a landlord is unwilling to make repairs to their property in a timely manner, and maintain their license – it's time we take a firm stand against these landlords, and take a firm stand in favor of tenants.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on 25-0141.

Thank you for your time,

Carol Ott
Director of Housing Services

Good Evening

I apologize that I can not appear in person, but my constituents I vehemently oppose this legislation as written.

Thousands of Landlords and Inspectors in our network take strong exception to the proposed legislation for which you are sponsoring regarding new housing/rental license regulations. Landlords pay the majority of property taxes in the city and often are treated with disrespect and touted as being the ill of everything that is wrong within city limits. Have you or your staff taken the time to attend Rent Court, or summary ejection proceedings? I would encourage you and your staff to do so. I'm sure you are familiar with the infamous DC squatter case that was recently in the news, where a professional Tenant took over the owner's property in several subsequent squatting episodes, even resorting to setting one of the units on fire to have an excuse to avoid eviction. Better still, the case in Baltimore where a Tenant was moving toward eviction and went to a court commissioner and obtained a protection order on two separate occasions under false pretenses against the landlord, both of which were dismissed by a judge after a hearing. She then concocted a story stating that the landlord burglarized her apartment, assaulted her put a "gun to her head" and "tore her clothing off" The landlord was of course arrested, jailed, fired from his job, lost custody of his children... for all charges to be dismissed in court and found to be deceptive fabrication. What was even more ironic, is that this tenant was later convicted after trial of assault on this very same landlord she had falsely accused. Baltimore City now faces a multi-million-dollar lawsuit in US federal court regarding the false arrest and constitutional violations of the landlord in the case mentioned above. The legislation you are proposing would exponentially put the city at risk for the same.

The proposed measures, while framed as tenant-protection reforms, represent a sweeping and punitive expansion of governmental power over private property that dangerously erodes due process, property rights, and basic principles of proportionality. Rather than targeting demonstrably unlawful conduct through existing enforcement mechanisms, this proposal presumes bad faith on the part of landlords as a class and substitutes broad administrative discretion for individualized judicial findings. Such an approach risks punishing compliance alongside noncompliance and undermines confidence in fair and neutral governance.

The creation of a Rental Licensing Receivership regime is particularly troubling. Authorizing DHCD to haul property owners into court and place their properties into receivership—potentially leading to forced sale—amounts to a quasi-civil forfeiture system cloaked as housing enforcement. Receivership has historically been reserved for extraordinary circumstances involving insolvency or abandonment, not as a routine regulatory cudgel. This mechanism invites abuse, strips owners of meaningful control over their property without adequate procedural safeguards, and creates perverse incentives for the government and receivers who stand to profit from prolonged control and eventual sale.

The requirement that DHCD audit between 100 and 200 licenses annually to root out alleged fraud is similarly overbroad and misguided. Audits premised on vague suspicions of “fraudulent document filings” risk becoming fishing expeditions rather than targeted enforcement actions grounded in probable cause. This policy implicitly assumes widespread dishonesty without empirical support and diverts limited resources away from addressing actual health and safety hazards in favor of bureaucratic box-checking that disproportionately burdens small and minority landlords.

Preventing the issuance or renewal of rental licenses solely because a water bill is unpaid is an irrational and punitive linkage that bears little relation to habitability or tenant safety. Water billing disputes are common, often contested, and may arise from errors for which the city is famous for, delayed payments by tenants, or municipal billing failures. Conditioning licensure on payment status transforms a civil utility dispute into a regulatory death sentence, effectively shutting down lawful rental operations without regard to fault, intent, or actual living conditions.

While no one disputes that intimidation and threats—particularly those invoking immigration enforcement—are reprehensible, the provision allowing license revocation based on alleged intimidation raises serious due process concerns. Without stringent evidentiary standards, clear definitions, and meaningful opportunities for defense, this measure invites false or exaggerated accusations to be weaponized in landlord-tenant disputes. Regulatory punishment must be based on adjudicated facts, not untested allegations, especially when the consequence is economic ruin.

The mandate restricting landlords' ability to reuse the same third-party rental inspector across renewal cycles purports to address conflicts of interest, yet it does so through arbitrary numerical limits rather than evidence of actual misconduct. Long-standing professional relationships do not inherently imply corruption; indeed, continuity often results in greater compliance and familiarity with property conditions. Please note, four renewal cycles could result in as long as 10 years. Forcing rotation for its own sake increases costs, delays renewals, and injects inconsistency into inspections, all while failing to address the real issue: the adequacy of inspection standards and oversight. As an inspector, I have found that in cases where a dwelling should not have had a license, more often than not, the owner has falsified the documentation, by simply printing the required form from the internet and signing the inspector's signature and submitting it to DHCD. My colleagues and I brought the issue of high likelihood of fraudulent documentation and the need for a closed system to the attention of the leadership of Baltimore Department of Housing and Community Development back in 2019, but it was ignored

Taken together, these proposals reflect a regulatory philosophy that favors coercion over collaboration, punishment over compliance, and optics over outcomes. They risk destabilizing the rental market, discouraging responsible ownership, and reducing the availability of affordable housing—precisely the opposite of their stated intent. Meaningful housing reform requires targeted enforcement of existing laws, robust due process protections, and policies that distinguish between truly egregious actors and the vast majority of landlords striving to comply in an increasingly hostile regulatory environment. I would be happy to discuss further at your convenience.

Greg Jones