



HEARING NOTES

Resolution: 22-0124R

Informational Hearing – Residential Rental Licensing

Committee: Ways and Means
Chaired by: Councilman Eric T. Costello **in-part** and Committee Member Burnett **in-part**
Hearing Date: Tuesday, April 18, 2023
Time (Beginning): 10:05 AM
Time (Ending): 12:00 Noon
Location: **Council Chambers**
Total Attendance: Approximately 25 in person
Approximately 10 virtually

Committee Members in Attendance:

Eric T. Costello
Kristerfer Burnett
Ryan Dorsey

Sharon Green Middleton – **excused absence**
Danielle McCray – **excused absence**

Bill Synopsis in the file?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Attendance sheet in the file?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Agency reports read?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Video or audio-digitally recorded?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file?.....	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a
Evidence of notification to property owners?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a
Final vote taken at this hearing?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

Jeffrey Hochstetler, Law Department
Jason Hessler, Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
Kathy Howard – Regional Management Inc.
Zafar Shah, Maryland Legal Aid
Albert Turner, Public Justice Center
Devin Carpenter, Tenant

Detrese Dowridge, Baltimore Renters United
Charles Armstrong, Tenant
Heather Johnson, Communities United

Major Issues Discussed

1. Councilmember Burnett, primary sponsor of the Resolution gave opening remarks. Some were:
 - The goal is to improve the standard(s) of housing for people
 - Some issues are:
 - Inconsistency of inspections
 - Conditions should be safe and healthy
 - Notification process, and
 - Renewal of licenses
 - Today we would like to hear more about the licensing process and other pertinent processes
2. The chairman went over the agency reports with the agency representatives.
3. Committee/council members asked questions, made comments and etc. Some were:
 - To the representative from the Department of Housing and Community Development
 - Can you walk us through the Inspection Process; start to finish?
 - How do you find your Inspectors and what qualifications do they need?
 - Unlicensed Properties
 - What happens when landlords don't apply to the law?
 - Difficulty getting licenses! Have this process improved?
 - Do you know how many properties are unlicensed? Answer: **Approximately 50%**
 - Comments:
 - I think the law needs to be strengthened for non-compliance when a landlord does not have a license!
 - There must be much stronger laws!
 - Is the DCHD looking at ways to strengthen the laws?
 - Something drastic must be done to get a handle on this issue
 - Complaints:
 - Walk us through what happens when a tenant lodges a complaint.
 - How can a license be revoked?
 - What is the process for someone who wants to lodge a complaint against an Inspector?
 - How do you vet and/or identify Inspectors who may have an investment in a property or is invested with the property owner? Answer: **You can't inspect your own property and we have internal enforcement**
 - What type of communication do you have with the State of Maryland to address complaints?
 - Concerns:
 - Landlords being in co-hoots with Inspectors
 - Do you examine all paperwork?
 - How does this work?
 - Hopefully we can get to the bottom of this!
 - Having enforcement when needed
 - Slumlords are of concern and very challenging
 - Inspectors letting "things go," improprieties
 - Burden of Proof/Compliance

- Talked about bad living conditions
 - Mold
 - Infestation of pests
 - Receives empty promises for getting repairs
 - Receives retaliatory eviction
 - Unsafe conditions (is of concern)
 - Need more DHCD Inspections along with second opinions
 - Inspectors/landlords need to be held to a certain standard!
 - Need an on-going relationship with DHCD!
 - A lot of tenants give up due to lack of responses
 - Is doing the best she can with living arrangement
 - Comment: If I don't keep the lids on trash containers, I get fined. Landlords should be fined too for non-compliance
5. Councilman Burnett gave closing remarks, thanked everyone for attending and stated, "I have heard many of the same concerns stated here today from my constituency. Some loopholes need to be closed. Access is critical and we will continue to work with the DHCD. Hearing recessed to reconvene at a later date.
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Marguerite M. Currin

Marguerite M. Currin, Committee Staff

Date: April 20, 2023

cc: Bill File

OCS Electronic File



Baltimore City Council Committee Hearing Attendance Record

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PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

CHECK HERE TO TESTIFY

First Name	Last Name	Address / Organization / Email	Testify	What is your position on this bill?		Lobbyist: Are you registered in the City?*	
				For	Against	Yes	No
John	Doe	400 N. Holliday St. Johndoenbmore@yahoo.com	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kathy Howard	Howard	11 E Fayette St	✓				
David	Prevor	11 E. Fayette St.					
Jeff	Hochstetler	Law Dept.					
Zafar Shah		Md. Legal Aid	✓	✓			✓
Albert Turner	Turner	Public Justice Center	✓	✓			✓
Devin Carpenter			✓	✓			✓
Delese Dover	Dowridge	Baltimore Renters united	✓	✓			✓

*NOTE: IF YOU ARE COMPENSATED OR INCUR EXPENSES IN CONNECTION WITH THIS BILL, YOU MAY BE REQUIRED BY LAW TO REGISTER WITH THE CITY ETHICS BOARD AS A LOBBYIST. REGISTRATION CAN BE DONE ONLINE AND IS A SIMPLE PROCESS. FOR INFORMATION VISIT: [HTTPS://ETHICS.BALTIMORECITY.GOV/](https://ethics.baltimorecity.gov/) OR CALL: 410-396-4730



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John	Doe	400 N. Holliday St. Johndoenbmore@yahoo.com	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Charles	Armstrong	307 Dolphin St. Apt 4B Baltimore, MD 21217	✓				

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City of Baltimore

City Council
City Hall, Room 408
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Meeting Minutes - Final

Ways and Means

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

10:00 AM Virtual/Du Burns Chambers, 4th Floor, City Hall, Phone:
+1-408-418-9388, Access Code: 2346 030 0458, Password:
Public, Link: [https://bmore.webex.com/bmore/j.php?](https://bmore.webex.com/bmore/j.php?MTID=m7ee50eac3d9e51ed258ad53cd6273613)
MTID=m7ee50eac3d9e51ed258ad53cd6273613

22-0124R

CALL TO ORDER

INTRODUCTIONS

ATTENDANCE

Present 3 - Eric T. Costello, Kristerfer Burnett, and Ryan Dorsey

Excused 2 - Danielle N. McCray, and Sharon Green Middleton

Absent 2 - Isaac "Yitzy" Schleifer, and Robert Stokes Sr.

ITEM SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING

22-0124R

Informational Hearing - Residential Rental Licensing

For the purpose of inviting representatives from the Department of Housing and Community Development and other interested parties to appear before the City Council to discuss the current rental licensing process for residential properties, problems that arise during the process, and improvements that could be made to the current process.

Sponsors: Kristerfer Burnett, John T. Bullock, Sharon Green Middleton

Hearing called to recess.

ADJOURNMENT