

PAMELA G. BEIDLE
Legislative District 32
Anne Arundel County

Finance Committee

Vice Chair

Executive Nominations Committee



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 202
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3593 · 301-858-3593
800-492-7122 Ext. 3593
Pamela.Beidle@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 4, 2020

SB746

State Fire Marshal – Sprinkler Systems Enforcement

Chairman Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Education, Health, and Environment Affairs Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss Senate Bill 746, State Fire Marshal – Sprinkler Systems Enforcement. This bill will ensure that Maryland's residential sprinkler requirement is enforced, by giving the State Fire Marshal authority to enforce the State's requirements that automatic sprinkler systems be installed in new one- and two-family dwellings.

In 2008, the residential sprinkler requirement was incorporated into the International Residential Code for all new one- and two-family dwellings.

In 2012, through a bill sponsored by Del. James Malone, Jr., the legislature passed a law saying that all counties and municipalities are prohibited from weakening these automatic sprinkler requirements.

Unfortunately, at least one jurisdiction is ignoring the sprinkler requirement and allowing new homes to be built without sprinklers. In the process, they are putting the lives of homeowners at risk, and the lives of firefighters at risk.

There is no enforcement of the sprinkler requirement currently taking place. That is why this bill gives authority to enforce the requirement to the State Fire Marshal.

As the State Fire Marshal has legal authority to enforce laws concerning the installation and maintenance of equipment intended to control, detect, or extinguish fire, it makes sense to give the Fire Marshal clear authority to enforce the sprinkler requirement.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on House Bill 823.