



Matt Losak
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In favor of HB1540—Mold Inspections, Standards, Reporting and Penalties

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Good day, Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Matt Losak and today I speak on behalf Renters Alliance, the first and only regional nonprofit dedicated exclusively to renter outreach, education, organizing and advocacy, and representing more than 30 nonprofit, civic, religious and political organization allies, as well as tenants associations and the nearly 40% of Maryland residents who rent their homes.

For many years now, we have heard with increasing frequency concerns that rental housing is suffering from mold infestations that threaten the health of tenants. In some rental communities, the issue has become so bad that childhood asthma rates are increasing in some properties forcing children to abandon school sports.

Other renters, especially seniors and families with infants are being forced to move from their homes as due to lung infections doctors source back to increased mold levels.

Our reports are not anecdotal either. According to the Centers for Disease Control, “Molds are very common in buildings.”—and a growing health problem. <https://www.cdc.gov/mold/faqs.htm>

But the challenge we face is that prior to this bill, local protections and remedies against mold have been vague, if existing at all. Most regulations call for “visible” mold to be “cleaned up”—which is often done by property staff with a little bleach and some paint. But this is not enough.

As climate change increases humidity, the use of heat and air conditioning in addition to poorly maintained rental communities that are plagued with leaky pipes, saturated roofs and walls, only conspire to increase mold levels.

HB1540 is a welcome answer to a growing problem. It’s time to enact rational standards that work to solve the problem, not paint it over with good intentions. We urge this committee to give this legislation serious consideration and its favorable report.

Thank you.