



**Bill Title:** Senate Bill 209 – Criminal Law – Unruly Social Gatherings – Civil Penalties

**Committee:** Judicial Proceedings Committee

**Date:** January 29, 2020

**Position:** Favorable with Amendment

This testimony is offered on behalf of the Maryland Multi-Housing Association (MMHA). MMHA is a professional trade association established in 1996, whose members consist of owners and managers of more than 210,000 rental housing homes in over 958 apartment communities. Our members house over 538,000 residents of the State of Maryland. MMHA also represents over 250 associate member companies who supply goods and services to the multi-housing industry.

Similar to the Unruly Social Gathering Ordinance in Baltimore County, SB 209 prohibits a person responsible for a premise from hosting or allowing an unruly social gathering on the property and permits a law enforcement officer to issue a citation to the responsible person if an unruly social gathering occurs there. The bill provides landlords a defense to the imposition of such a penalty where the landlord neither authorized, knew in advance of, nor participated in the unruly social gathering and the landlord provides evidence at a hearing on the citation that they have regained possession of or taken action to regain possession of the leased premises under Maryland law.

As has been the case in Baltimore County, MMHA supports all efforts that enable residents of communities to achieve a high quality of life, including safe and quiet living conditions. However, we offer the following friendly amendment to clarify the bill's defense language regarding leased property in a multi-family environment where an owner is clearly in the process of addressing the disturbance.

On page 6, in line 15, after deleting the “.” add “UNLESS THERE IS PROOF THAT (I)A CHANGE IN OCCUPANCY OCCURRED AT THE LEASED PREMISES DURING THAT PERIOD OF TIME OR (II)IF THE PREMISES IS A MULTIPLE FAMILY DWELLING, THE VIOLATION OCCURRED IN ANOTHER UNIT IN THE MULTIPLE FAMILY DWELLING.”



For the foregoing reasons, MMHA respectfully requests a **favorable report with amendment on Senate Bill 209.**

**Aaron J. Greenfield, MMHA Director of Government Affairs, 410.446.1992**