



Maryland Municipal League  
*The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns*

TESTIMONY

February 9, 2021

**Committee:** House Environment and Transportation Committee

**Bill:** HB 361 – Environment – Mold Inspections – Standards, Reporting, and Penalties

**Position:** Oppose

**Reason for Position:**

The Maryland Municipal League is in opposition to House Bill 361 as introduced, which would bill would require local jurisdictions to conduct – or hire a third-party inspector to conduct – mold inspections of all rental dwellings.

The League is supportive of efforts to identify and remediate mold and appreciates the sponsor's shared intention to provide flexibility to local governments. The past two sessions, MML and MACo have proposed a framework that takes advantage of the local inspection schedule and code enforcement complaint systems in place. ***Where, in the course of their regular duties, if an inspector or code enforcement officer observes what they believe to be mold, they must notify the landlord of their responsibility for testing and remediation.*** This framework would be possible with existing budgetary resources and would provide a meaningful step toward a mold-free rental environment.

As we read it, the language of the bill does not reflect this arrangement and would be very costly for municipalities to implement.

Maryland's municipalities, by and large, do not perform regular inspections of rental properties. They do not have the staff capacity. Instead, several of them conduct inspections in accordance with their rental licensing process, which may call for inspections every three years or between tenets, as examples. In other jurisdictions, Municipal Code Enforcement Officers will respond to complaints about mold and may require testing and remediation by the landlord. Further, more municipal staff would be needed to administer such a program, enforce remediation, and levy penalties. Local jurisdictions simply do not have the staff, equipment, or expertise to carry out the requirements of this bill.

As introduced, MML respectfully requests that the committee provide HB 361 with an unfavorable report.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Scott A. Hancock  
Angelica Bailey  
Bill Jorch  
Justin Fiore

Executive Director  
Director, Government Relations  
Director, Research & Policy Analysis  
Manager, Government Relations