



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB1295

**REAL PROPERTY - RESIDENTIAL RENTAL APARTMENTS - AIR-CONDITIONING REQUIREMENTS
SUPPORT**

MR. CHAIRMAN, VICE CHAIR AND COLLEAGUES. FOR THE RECORD, I AM DELEGATE MARY LEHMAN, AND I AM ASKING FOR YOUR FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION OF HB 1295: REAL PROPERTY - RESIDENTIAL RENTAL APARTMENTS - AIR-CONDITIONING REQUIREMENTS.

HB 1295 REQUIRES LANDLORDS TO MAINTAIN THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS IN APARTMENT RENTAL UNITS: LANDLORD-CONTROLLED AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS MUST MAINTAIN A TEMPERATURE OF NO GREATER THAN SEVENTY-FIVE DEGREES IN ALL HABITABLE AREAS OF THE APARTMENT, AND TENANT-CONTROLLED AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS MUST BE CAPABLE OF MAINTAINING A TEMPERATURE OF NO GREATER THAN SEVENTY-FIVE DEGREES IN ALL HABITABLE AREAS OF THE APARTMENT. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT IF ENACTED, THIS BILL WOULD ONLY BE IN EFFECT FROM JUNE 1 UNTIL SEPTEMBER 30, AND ONLY APPLIES TO UNITS CONSTRUCTED ON OR AFTER JUNE 1, 2024, OR UNITS THAT UNDERGO ANY ELECTRICAL OR HEATING RENOVATIONS ON OR AFTER OCTOBER 1, 2024. THIS BILL IS MODELED AFTER LAWS THAT HAVE ALREADY BEEN ENACTED IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY AND MONTGOMERY COUNTY.

THIS IS A COMMON-SENSE BILL MEANT TO ADDRESS THE RISING TEMPERATURES THAT ARE BEING FELT BY MARYLANDERS. UNDER CURRENT MARYLAND LAW, LANDLORDS HAVE A REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE THE CAPACITY TO HEAT A RENTAL UNIT DURING THE WINTER,

BUT NO SUCH REQUIREMENT EXISTS FOR COOLING A RENTAL UNIT IN THE SUMMER. ONE COULD ARGUE THAT LIVING IN AN APARTMENT KEPT AT A TEMPERATURE IN THE HIGH SEVENTIES IS "COMFORTABLE ENOUGH," AND FOR PARTS OF THE DAY, THIS IS CERTAINLY TRUE, AT LEAST FOR HEALTHY ADULTS. BUT THIS BILL IS NOT ONLY ABOUT COMFORT, AND IT IS NOT ONLY ABOUT HEALTHY ADULTS; IT IS ABOUT ENSURING THAT ALL TENANTS ARE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO USE AIR CONDITIONING AS A TOOL TO HELP THEIR BODIES' KEEP THEIR CORE TEMPERATURE AT A HEALTHY LEVEL.

MAINTAINING A HEALTHY CORE TEMPERATURE IS IMPORTANT FOR A MULTITUDE OF REASONS. FOR SOME BACKGROUND, THE TERM "CORE BODY TEMPERATURE" REFERS TO THE TEMPERATURE OF THE BODY'S INTERNAL ORGANS, AND THERE IS A VERY NARROW RANGE THAT IS CONSIDERED "HEALTHY." ADDITIONALLY, THE BODY'S ABILITY TO ACTIVELY LOWER ITS CORE TEMPERATURE SERVES AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF FALLING ASLEEP,¹ AND DURING THE RAPID EYE MOVEMENT PORTION OF THE SLEEP CYCLE, THE BODY BECOMES WORSE AT THERMOREGULATION, SO WE BECOME MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO BEING WOKEN UP DUE TO WARM TEMPERATURES.² THIS IS BECOMING A SALIENT ISSUE. ACCORDING TO AN ARTICLE BY THE NEW YORK TIMES, THE AMOUNT OF NIGHTS IN BALTIMORE THAT WERE CONSIDERED TO BE "ABNORMALLY HOT" (APPROXIMATELY 72.5° F) HAS JUMPED FROM JUST 5% IN THE 1960S TO 26% IN THE 2020S.³ NIGHTTIME USED TO SERVE AS A NATURAL BREAK FROM SUMMER HEAT, BUT THIS IS NO LONGER A REALITY, AND AS WE ALL KNOW, THE IMPORTANCE OF BOTH QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF SLEEP CANNOT BE UNDERSTATED.

LET ME BE CLEAR: THIS IS NOT A BILL THAT WAS SOLELY DESIGNED TO ENSURE THE COMFORT OF TENANTS. IT IS MEANT TO KEEP TENANTS SAFE BY GUARANTEEING THEM ACCESS TO AIR CONDITIONING THAT HELPS TO KEEP THEIR BODIES AT A HEALTHY TEMPERATURE.

I URGE A FAVORABLE REPORT.