



## House Bill 1179

Committee: Environment and Transportation  
Date: March 2, 2024  
**Position: Unfavorable**

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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 properties that house more than 600,000 residents of the State of Maryland. MMHA also represents over 250 associate member companies who supply goods and services to the multi-housing industry.

House Bill 1179 (“HB 1179”) simultaneously prohibits a property owner that participates in a Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program from placing any restriction on the number of pets in a dwelling unit and explicitly clarifies that a property owner and their agent are still liable for damage caused by pets. Additionally, HB 1179 prohibits a property owner from requiring any compensation or payment from a resident for possessing one or more pets in a dwelling unit. Finally, while HB 1179 explicitly allows the State or a local government to place restrictions on the possession of pets in a housing unit, the bill oddly fails to extend that provision to property owners.

MMHA is concerned that HB 1179 restricts property owners from making decisions regarding pets in the property, prohibits property owners from requiring any compensation that could protect against possible damages caused by the pets, and explicitly ensures that property owners are still liable for the damage caused by a residents pets. Effectively, HB 1179 prohibits property owners from making decisions regarding their property and then subjects the property owners to liability for decisions they would be prohibited from making.

MMHA is aware of amendments being offered by proponents of HB 1179. While MMHA appreciates the intent, the amendments unfortunately fail to address the issues created within HB 1179. For example, the amended version of HB 1179 would still prohibit a property owner from placing any restriction on the number of pets in a residential unit, which has the potential to create significant issues at a property and subject property owners to substantial liability. For these reasons, MMHA respectfully requests an unfavorable report on HB 1179.