



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

DAWN LUEDTKE
COUNCILMEMBER
DISTRICT 7

January 24, 2024

The Honorable Senator William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Senate Bill 141, *Multifamily Dwellings - Smoking Policies*

Dear Chairman Smith:

I am writing to urge you to support Senate Bill 141 regarding smoking policies for multifamily dwellings. This bill would require the governing bodies of common ownership communities to develop smoking policies for any multifamily dwelling with four or more units.

Montgomery County adopted a health regulation in 2011 that prohibits smoking in common areas of all multifamily dwellings in the County. It also includes provisions requiring that no smoking notices are placed in these common areas. Senate Bill 141 would give common ownership communities a tool to adopt additional measures as they deem necessary, and make this applicable statewide.

Research shows that secondhand smoke could cause health problems, especially for vulnerable communities such as children and those with existing respiratory challenges. With Maryland legalizing cannabis for recreational use, we must be aware of potential new health risks. While data is limited due to federal restrictions on cannabis consumption, preliminary research shows that secondhand cannabis smoke presents many of the same health risks as tobacco smoke, in addition to carrying enough THC to impact the mental state of a child or someone with low tolerance.^{1,2} This also includes the ability to take measures to protect bystanders from exposure to respiratory irritants, whether it is consumed via a lighted substance, or vaped and releasing aerosolized particles.

In a high-profile 2023 Washington D.C. case, a woman sued over her neighbor's use of cannabis as she claimed it presented a public nuisance and diminished her quality of life.³ By approving this legislation, we are proactively addressing potential similar situations in multifamily dwelling units in the communities we represent.

Sincerely,

Dawn Luedtke
Councilmember, District 7
Montgomery County

cc: Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/health-effects/second-hand-smoke.html>

² <https://nida.nih.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana/what-are-effects-secondhand-exposure-to-marijuana-smoke>

³ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2023/01/14/marijuana-smell-lawsuit/>