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Senator William C. Smith, Jr.  
Senator Jeff Waldstreicher  
Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: SB 0141 – Multifamily Dwellings -Smoking Policies**  
**Hearing: January 30, 2024 Position: Oppose**

Dear Chair Smith & Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Committee Members:

This letter is submitted on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Action Committee (“MD-LAC”) of the Community Associations Institute (“CAI”). CAI represents individuals and professionals who reside in or work with condominiums, homeowners associations and cooperatives throughout the State of Maryland.

MD-LAC is writing today to voice our opposition for SB 0141 which requires a multi-family dwelling (condominium or cooperative association) with four or more units to adopt a policy to set forth where smoking is both permitted and prohibited on the property of the multi-family dwelling. Such bill also requires a multi-family dwelling to establish a process to file a complaint against violators of such smoking policy and set forth any penalties or fines for violation of the policy.

While some condominium or cooperative associations may have a smoking policy in place, there are significant challenges to enforcing such a policy. The bill does not address concerns within the community association industry pertaining to enforcement of such policies. It is exceptionally difficult for a community association to penalize violators of a no-smoking policy because there is often insufficient proof of the source of the smoke. Smoking complaints are often unsubstantiated claims from a resident who believes smoke is emanating from a nearby unit or common area but has no definitive proof of such claim. By mandating a multi-family dwelling to adopt such a policy, the bill is inadvertently requiring a multi-family dwelling to enforce such a

**Maryland Legislative Action Committee**  
**Post Office Box 6636**  
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policy when that is difficult, if not impossible, do to. This could lead to claims against the multi-family dwelling for failing to enforce such a policy. Therefore, multi-family dwellings should have autonomy to determine if such a policy is prudent for their community and whether enforcement is possible.

In addition, although the bill requires the multi-family dwelling to create a policy on any “lighted matter” or “lighted substance,” this bill does not address the recent legalization of marijuana in the state of Maryland. Multi-family dwellings must first have guidance from the state on whether recreational marijuana can be prohibited in multi-family dwellings before a policy on smoking can be required. Housing providers are already faced with Fair Housing accommodation requests with respect to medical or medicinal marijuana and should not now be forced to decide between a potential discrimination claim from the user of medical marijuana and enforcement of a mandatory no-smoking policy.

Accordingly, the MD-LAC respectfully request that the Committee does not give SB 0141 a favorable report.

We are available to answer any questions which you may have. Please feel free to contact any of the individuals listed: Lisa Harris Jones, CAI MD-LAC lobbyist, at 410-366-1500 or by email at [lisa.jones@mdlobbyist.com](mailto:lisa.jones@mdlobbyist.com); Hillary Collins, Esq., member by email at [hcollins@reesbroome.com](mailto:hcollins@reesbroome.com); or Vicki Caine, Chair 215-806-9143, or [MDLacChair1@gmail.com](mailto:MDLacChair1@gmail.com).

Sincerely,

*Vicki Caine*

Vicki Caine  
Chair, CAI MD-LAC

*Hillary Collins*

Hillary Collins, Esq., CIRMS  
Member, CAI MD-LAC

CAI is a national organization dedicated to fostering vibrant, competent, harmonious community associations for more than thirty years. Its members include community association volunteer leaders, professional managers, community management firms, and other professionals and companies that provide products and services to common interest associations. As part of its mission, CAI advocates for legislative and regulatory policies that support responsible governance and effective management. As part of this purpose state Legislative Action Committees represent CAI members before state legislatures and agencies on issues such as governance, assessments collection, insurance and construction defects.