

February 4, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chairman, House Environment & Transportation Committee
Room 251 House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE Letter of Opposition HB330 - Real Property - Residential Rental Apartments - Air-Conditioning Requirements

Dear Chairman Korman,

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 100,000 employees of the building industry across the State of Maryland, appreciates the opportunity to participate in the discussion surrounding HB 339 Real Property - Residential Rental Apartments - Air-Conditioning Requirements. MBIA opposes this measure in its current posture.

HB339 requires a landlord to provide air-conditioning to certain residential rental units in a certain manner beginning June 1, 2025, for newly constructed residential rental units and beginning October 1, 2025, for residential rental units that undergo certain alterations.

Regarding the portions on alterations, on page 2 line 6-11 the bill makes reference to maintenance of the unit, per ASHARE under the alterations sections there is no inclusion of "maintenance" to the unit. The temperature requirement of the unit, lines 15-22 discusses a temperature requirement that should be within 90 percent of the ASHARE Standard 55 and should be within 80 percent should the temperature on a particular day reach or exceed 92.3 degrees. The standard it recommends per ASHARE for comfort should range between 67 and 82 degrees depending upon the time of year and even more specifically during certain times of day. This is not clear and would seek to have a concrete number. The complexity of these requirements is going to result in confusion and landlords being cited for failure to comply. The bill is also silent on compliance such financing where either the state or county would offer financing options to landlords who need to make substantial upgrades in order to comply.

We would recommend that the bill sponsor look to mirror Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties, who have enacted such legislation that require landlords of townhomes and multifamily rental properties to provide and maintain central air conditioning or individual air conditioning units that have the capacity to cool habitable spaces to eighty degrees Fahrenheit (80F) or less from June 1st to September 30th.

For these reasons, we respectfully request the Committee give this measure an unfavorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee