



House Bill 339

Date: January 31, 2025
Committee: Environment and Transportation
Position: Unfavorable

This testimony is offered on behalf of the Maryland Multi-Housing Association (MMHA). MMHA is a professional trade association established in 1996, whose membership consists of owners and managers of more than 207,246 rental housing homes in more than 937 apartment communities. Our members house over 667,000 residents of the State of Maryland throughout the entire State of Maryland. MMHA membership also includes more than 216 associate members that supply goods and services to the multi-housing industry. More information is available at <https://www.mmhaonline.org/>

House Bill 339 (“HB 339”) requires a housing provider to provide air-conditioning for new units and units undergoing HVAC system upgrades by June 1, 2025, and October 1, 2025, respectively. Specifically, the bill uses the acceptable operative temperature thresholds set by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) Standard 55 to set cooling temperatures in residential rental units in apartment buildings. MMHA expresses concern with the use of ASHRAE standards as a means to mandate air conditioning in our members’ residential units.

While MMHA acknowledges and appreciates the time spent discussing ASHRAE standards with the Sponsor, we cannot support nor remain neutral on the bill in its current form. These standards are highly technical and are primarily used by building engineers in the design and maintenance of HVAC systems. Of note, the “alteration” threshold is not clearly defined which may inadvertently cause some of our members to be noncompliant. Additionally, the temperature thresholds referenced are based on naturally conditioned spaces, not mechanical cooling systems.

We are happy to engage further with the Sponsor and continue discussions regarding the bill; however, in its current form, MMHA respectfully requests an unfavorable report on HB 339. Please contact Ashley Clark at ashley.clark@mdlobbyist.com with any questions or concerns. Thank you.