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MAYOR

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**SB 0624**

March 10, 2026

**TO:** Members of the Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee

**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Director, Mayor's Office of Government Relations

**RE:** Senate Bill 624 - Public Safety - Short-Term Rental Units - Fire Safety (Jillian and Lindsay Wiener Short-Term Rental Fire Safety Act)

**POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT**

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** Senate Bill (SB) 624 **with amendment**.

SB 624 would require Short-Term Rentals (STRs) to meet additional fire safety requirements such as posted escape routes and emergency contact information, working smoke detectors and accessible fire extinguishers, amongst other requirements for inspections and reporting to the State Fire Marshal.

SB 624 would require additional modifications to Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) current program for Short Term Rentals (STRs) which already includes robust licensing, registration and inspection requirements. Specifically, SB 0264 would have an operational and fiscal impact on DHCD. The Bill would require the addition of new tracking software and one Operations Support Specialist III (OSS) staff person to oversee the program. Baltimore City currently has 515 licensed STRs under our existing program and the BCA would want to incorporate these additional requirements described in the Bill using a third-party inspection program where possible.

In cases where inspections must be conducted by municipal staff, Baltimore City would have to pass local legislation to be able to charge an appropriate fee to recover the costs of inspections that could not be accomplished via third party inspectors. **The BCA would recommend a friendly amendment to specify a date by which the State Fire Marshall would provide information for third party inspectors regarding qualifications, insurance requirements and other procedures.**

BCA is actively working to ensure that STRs are properly licensed. We have created a request in our 311-system specific to rental licensing and registration, which includes STR's, called "Rental

license/registration.” We encourage community members to report STRs suspected of operating without a license to protect our residents and visitors.

The BCA supports the idea of creating safer STRs and is pleased to work with the State on this effort.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable with the above recommended amendment** report on SB 624.