

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Revised

House Bill 1396

(Delegate Haynes, *et al.*)

Environmental Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**Fire Safety - High-Rise Buildings - Mobility Impaired Individuals**

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This bill requires, for fire safety purposes, the owner of a residential high-rise building to give reasonable written notice to a resident who is “mobility impaired” of the resident’s right to request a rental unit on the first five floors of the building if one should become available.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** To the extent the State owns any residential high-rise buildings covered under the bill, the bill’s requirements can be handled with existing budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** To the extent a local government owns any residential high-rise buildings covered under the bill, the bill’s requirements can be handled with existing budgeted resources.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** Title 9 of the Public Safety Article addresses fire protection and prevention. Subtitle 4 (*High-Rise Building Safety in Case of Fire*) states that its purpose is to provide for the physical safety and protection of property of occupants of high-rise buildings in case of fire. The stated legislative findings of the subtitle are as follows:

- Without adequate protection, residents of high-rise buildings are dependent on descending multiple flights of steps or jumping from windows when a fire occurs.

- For many elderly residents of high-rise buildings, this is physically impossible.
- Most firefighting and rescue operations are also conducted inside the high-rise building, where there are greater obstacles to rescuing occupants and controlling and extinguishing the fire.
- Many tragedies could be avoided by installation of automatic fire extinguishing equipment in these situations, usually at no great additional cost to builders.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Department of State Police, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 8, 2010  
ncs/hlb Revised - House Third Reader - April 7, 2010

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