

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 125

(Senator Gile)

Judicial Proceedings

Judiciary

Residential Real Property - Local Limits on Summoning Law Enforcement or Emergency Services

This bill prohibits the governing body of a county or municipality from *enforcing* local laws or ordinances that (1) establish a threshold of requests to summon law enforcement or emergency services to a residential property as grounds for designating a property as a nuisance or (2) otherwise penalize or authorize a penalty against an operator, owner, owner-occupant, or tenant for the act of summoning law enforcement or emergency services to a residential property (including if another individual summoned the assistance). **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect local government operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Pursuant to Chapters 768 and 769 of 2023, the governing body of a county or municipality is prohibited from *enacting* local laws or ordinances that (1) establish a threshold of requests to summon law enforcement or emergency services to a residential property as grounds for designating a property as a nuisance or (2) otherwise penalize or authorize a penalty against an operator, owner, owner-occupant, or tenant for the act of

summoning law enforcement or emergency services to a residential property (including if another individual summoned the assistance).

Chapters 768 and 769 also created a presumption that a local law or ordinance related to summoning law enforcement or emergency services to a residential property is prohibited if it authorizes or requires (1) the assessment of a monetary penalty or fine on an operator, owner, owner-occupant, or tenant; (2) the use of an action for repossession of a dwelling unit from a tenant or termination or nonrenewal of a tenant's lease; or (3) the revocation, suspension, or nonrenewal of a rental license.

These provisions do not apply to a local law or ordinance governing the following:

- the installation and use of residential security alarm systems;
- the physical condition, sanitation, maintenance, or repair of real property, including vacant buildings;
- parking enforcement;
- calls to law enforcement concerning social gatherings or excessive noise that do not involve an offense set forth in the Criminal Law Article and are (1) made with the intent to harass another or (2) knowingly false, as a whole or in material part; or
- short-term rental units, as specified.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: HB 249 (Delegate Palakovich Carr) - Judiciary.

Information Source(s): Harford, Montgomery, and Wicomico counties; Maryland Association of Counties; Maryland Municipal League; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 20, 2025
js/jkb Third Reader - February 7, 2025

Analysis by: Donavan A. Ham

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510