

SENATE BILL 130

M3, N1

(PRE-FILED)

6lr1507
CF HB 220

By: **Senator Henson**

Requested: October 30, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Environment – Water – Individual Unit Meters**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing the installation of individual unit water meters for certain
4 apartment houses and dwelling units; prohibiting the owner, operator, or manager
5 of an apartment house, or a contractor hired by the owner, operator, or manager,
6 from imposing certain costs on a unit; requiring each individual unit meter to include
7 a leak detection monitor; authorizing the occupant of a dwelling unit to periodically
8 inspect the leak detection monitor installed for their unit; requiring the owner,
9 operator, or manager of an apartment house, or a contractor hired by the owner,
10 operator, or manager to maintain certain records; prohibiting unpaid water bills
11 from being treated as unpaid rent in an eviction process; establishing a certain
12 complaint process; and generally relating to individual unit water meters.

13 BY adding to
14 Article – Environment
15 Section 9–1115
16 Annotated Code of Maryland
17 (2014 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

18 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
19 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

20 **Article – Environment**

21 **9–1115.**

22 **(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**
23 **INDICATED.**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(2) "ADEQUATE RECORDS" INCLUDES:

(I) A COPY OF ALL CHARGES THAT THE WATER SERVICE PROVIDER IMPOSED ON THE OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER OF AN APARTMENT HOUSE IN THE PRECEDING 2 YEARS;

(II) THE TOTAL UTILITY COST IMPOSED ON ALL UNITS IN THE FACILITY EACH MONTH FOR THE CURRENT CALENDAR YEAR AND PREVIOUS CALENDAR YEAR;

(III) THE TOTAL REVENUE COLLECTED FROM OCCUPANTS TO PAY THE CHARGES IMPOSED ON THE OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER BY THE WATER SERVICE PROVIDER EACH MONTH FOR THE CURRENT CALENDAR YEAR AND PREVIOUS CALENDAR YEAR;

(IV) AN EXPLANATION OF THE FORMULA USED TO ALLOCATE THE COST OF EACH UNIT'S WATER CONSUMPTION; AND

(V) ANY OTHER INFORMATION NECESSARY FOR A TENANT TO VERIFY A WATER UTILITY BILL.

(3) (I) "APARTMENT HOUSE" MEANS ONE OR MORE BUILDINGS THAT EACH CONTAIN MORE THAN TWO DWELLING UNITS AND IN WHICH ALL THE DWELLING UNITS ARE OCCUPIED PRIMARILY FOR NONTRANSIENT USE WITH RENT PAID AT INTERVALS OF 1 WEEK OR LONGER.

(II) "APARTMENT HOUSE" INCLUDES A RESIDENTIAL CONDOMINIUM OR COOPERATIVE, WHETHER THE UNITS ARE RENTED OR OWNER OCCUPIED.

(4) "DWELLING UNIT" MEANS PREMISES THAT CONSIST OF ONE OR MORE ROOMS SUITABLE FOR OCCUPANCY AS A RESIDENCE AND THAT CONTAIN KITCHEN AND BATHROOM FACILITIES.

(5) "INDIVIDUAL UNIT METER" MEANS EQUIPMENT USED TO DETERMINE THE ACTUAL USE OF WATER FOR EACH RESIDENTIAL UNIT IN AN APARTMENT HOUSE.

(6) "WATER SERVICE PROVIDER" MEANS, AS APPLICABLE:

(I) A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION THAT PROVIDES WATER AND SEWERAGE SERVICES UNDER SUBTITLE 7 OF THIS TITLE;

1 (II) A WATER COMPANY, AS DEFINED IN § 1-101 OF THE PUBLIC
2 UTILITIES ARTICLE; OR

3 (III) THE WASHINGTON SUBURBAN SANITARY COMMISSION.

4 (B) SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION, AND WITH THE
5 APPROVAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, A
6 LOCAL HOUSING AUTHORITY ESTABLISHED UNDER DIVISION II OF THE HOUSING
7 AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ARTICLE MAY INSTALL INDIVIDUAL UNIT METERS
8 FOR ANY COMBINATION OF APARTMENT HOUSES OR DWELLING UNITS.

9 (C) AN OWNER, AN OPERATOR, OR A MANAGER OF AN APARTMENT HOUSE,
10 OR A CONTRACTOR HIRED BY THE OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER, MAY INSTALL
11 AN INDIVIDUAL UNIT METER FOR EACH DWELLING UNIT THAT IS NOT INDIVIDUALLY
12 METERED FOR WATER TO ALLOCATE FAIRLY THE COST OF EACH UNIT'S WATER
13 CONSUMPTION.

14 (D) (1) AN OWNER, AN OPERATOR, OR A MANAGER OF AN APARTMENT
15 HOUSE, OR A CONTRACTOR HIRED BY THE OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER, WHO
16 INSTALLS INDIVIDUAL UNIT METERS UNDER THIS SECTION TO PROVIDE BULK
17 METERED SERVICE MAY NOT IMPOSE ON A UNIT IN THE FACILITY ANY WATER OR
18 SEWERAGE COST EXCEPT THE CHARGES THAT THE WATER SERVICE PROVIDER
19 ACTUALLY IMPOSES ON THE OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER.

20 (2) THE CHARGES IMPOSED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS
21 SUBSECTION SHALL BE ALLOCATED AMONG THE UNITS IN PROPORTION TO THE
22 ACTUAL USAGE BY THE UNIT.

23 (3) THE OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER OF AN APARTMENT
24 HOUSE, OR A CONTRACTOR HIRED BY THE OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER, MAY
25 NOT IMPOSE ON A UNIT IN THE FACILITY ANY COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH:

26 (I) POOR MAINTENANCE OR LEAKS THAT THE OWNER,
27 OPERATOR, MANAGER, OR CONTRACTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR; OR

28 (II) COMMON AREA USAGE.

29 (4) THE OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER OF AN APARTMENT
30 HOUSE, OR A CONTRACTOR HIRED BY THE OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER, MAY
31 COLLECT AN ADDITIONAL SERVICE CHARGE NOT EXCEEDING \$1 PER UNIT PER
32 MONTH TO COVER ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS AND BILLING.

(E) (1) EACH INDIVIDUAL UNIT METER UNDER THIS SECTION IS SUBJECT TO THE REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS THAT THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ADOPTS FOR THE ACCURACY, TESTING, AND RECORD KEEPING OF INDIVIDUAL UNIT METERS.

(2) REGULATIONS ADOPTED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE AT LEAST AS STRINGENT AS THE REGULATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE WATER METERS THAT WATER SERVICE PROVIDERS INSTALL.

(F) (1) EACH INDIVIDUAL UNIT METER UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL INCLUDE A LEAK DETECTION MONITOR.

(2) THE OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER OF THE APARTMENT HOUSE, OR A CONTRACTOR HIRED BY THE OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER, SHALL ALLOW THE OCCUPANT OF THE UNIT TO PERIODICALLY INSPECT THE LEAK DETECTION MONITOR.

(G) THE OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER OF THE APARTMENT HOUSE, OR A CONTRACTOR HIRED BY THE OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER, SHALL:

(1) MAINTAIN ADEQUATE RECORDS REGARDING INDIVIDUAL UNIT METERS; AND

(2) ALLOW THE OCCUPANT OF THE UNIT TO INSPECT THE RECORDS DURING REASONABLE BUSINESS HOURS.

(H) UNPAID WATER BILLS UNDER THIS SECTION MAY NOT BE TREATED AS UNPAID RENT IN AN EVICTION PROCEEDING.

(I) (1) A COMPLAINT BY AN OCCUPANT OF A DWELLING UNIT AGAINST AN OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER OF AN APARTMENT HOUSE, OR A CONTRACTOR HIRED BY THE OWNER, OPERATOR, OR MANAGER, UNDER THIS SECTION MAY BE FILED IN THE COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY WHERE THE APARTMENT HOUSE IS LOCATED.

(2) A COMPLAINT FILED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION MAY BE HANDLED BY:

(I) THE LANDLORD-TENANT COMMISSION, IF ONE EXISTS, OF THE COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY;

(II) THE CONSUMER PROTECTION AGENCY, IF ONE EXISTS, OF THE COUNTY OR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION IF THERE IS NOT A LANDLORD-TENANT

1 COMMISSION IN THE COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY OR IF THE COMMISSION DOES NOT
2 HAVE JURISDICTION; OR

3 (iii) THE CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION OF THE OFFICE OF
4 THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, IF THERE IS NOT A CONSUMER PROTECTION AGENCY IN
5 THE COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY OR THE AGENCY DOES NOT HAVE JURISDICTION.

6 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
7 October 1, 2026.