

**Testimony in support of Maryland House Bill HB408**  
**Bill Title: Public Utilities - Gas Service Regulator Safety (Flower Branch Act)**  
**Felicia Charlouis-Prospere**

Good Afternoon Economic Matter Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. My name is Felicia Charlouis- Prospere and I am a resident of Montgomery County, Silver Spring, Maryland. I am here to urge the committee to support the Maryland House Bill HB408 gas service regulator safety (Flower Branch Act).

I want to highlight the following points about why this legislation is important.

I have lived in the Flower Branch Apartments for about 5 ½ years. On August 10th, 2016, we had a huge explosion in the building right in front of where I live. My husband woke me up when he heard the explosion and saw the fire. I didn't hear the explosion because I was exhausted after coming home from a 10 hours trip. I saw kids and adults yelling for help. We ran to safety in the Giant parking lot. Lives were lost that night, and this was a nightmare our community forever will live with.

I don't want to bring those memories back, I want to move forward. The National Transportation Safety Board has provided recommendations on gas safety, including moving the regulators to the outside. This wasn't done in our complex until the last few months, about three years after the explosion. Due to the delay, in the summer of 2019, we had to endure gas leaks from

regulators in our building and buildings nearby. Not only from the regulators, but we have had various gas situations, including faulty stove ovens.

The smell of gas in the building relives the trauma, and we can't continue having these situations. We urge you to take responsibility to enforce the NTSB recommendations. Please note that recommendations are useless until they are materialized. Also, continue making analysis to make sure we protect tenants from various gas situations throughout the State of Maryland.

Again, I urge you to support Bill HB408.

Thank you for allowing me to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions.