

March 4, 2020

House Bill 1540 – Environment and Transportation – Mold Inspections – Standards, Reporting, and Penalties

2001 Medical Parkway
Annapolis, Md. 21401
443-481-1000
TDD: 443-481-1235
askAAMC.org

Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

Thank you Chair Barve, Vice-Chair Stein, Delegate Henson for sponsoring, and members of the committee for hearing House Bill 1540 and allowing me to come here before you today.

My Name is Lenard Nyangwara, and I am a Registered Respiratory Therapist at Anne Arundel Medical Center of Luminis Health. Practicing Respiratory Therapy in Maryland since 2001, I have witnessed patients, both children and adults, receiving treatment for wheezing or asthma with unknown origin. The fear in the patients and their parents is increasingly evident when they explain their suspicions of an existence of mold in their homes.

Lungs are sensitive organs and exposing lungs to environmental pollutants, particularly for young children, affects lung development and lung function. Exacerbations of asthma and other pulmonary diseases impair lung function development for children and fast-forwards lung function decline for the elderly; measured by levels of forced expiratory volume in 1 second (FEV1). Normal lung development peaks in the late teens to the early 20's before reaching full lung function. Although some children outgrow asthmatic symptoms, many do not overcome lung function impairment that continue into adulthood (Morgan, Stern & Sherril, 2005). Chronic asthma may lead to the development of Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (COPD), a third leading cause of death in the United States as reported by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Intrusion of water through leaky roofs, windows and plumbing compromises homes with increased moisture creating a breeding ground for mold (Sylvain, Rachel & Taylor, 2019). In their study, Sylvain, et al discovered that housing units with no visible mold harbored higher densities of fungal communities than those with visible mold. Without testing for mold, families continue to live in such housing units that damage their lungs without a remedy.

In conjunction with the President of Anne Arundel Medical Center, Sherry B. Perkins, who has submitted written testimony, I respectfully ask that the Committee favorably support and recommend House Bill 1540.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lenny Nyangwara
Anne Arundel Medical Center

References

Sylvain, I. A., Rachel, I. A., & Taylor, J. W. (2019). A different suite: The assemblage of distinct fungal communities in water-damaged units of a poorly-maintained public housing building. *PLoS One*, 14(3)

Morgan WJ, Stern DA, Sherrill DL, et al. : Outcome of asthma and wheezing in the first 6 years of life: follow-up through adolescence. *Am J Respir Crit Care Med*. 2005;172(10):1253–8. 10