



TESTIMONY
Maryland General Assembly
Environmental and Transportation Committee
In Favor of HB129

Matt Losak 301-588-3987
Executive Director, Montgomery County Renters Alliance, Inc.
January 20, 2021

Good afternoon, Committee Members. My name is Matt Losak and I am a co-founder and Executive Director of the Montgomery County Renters Alliance—an alliance of more than 30 labor, community, religious, political and civic action organizations and thousands of renters. We are Maryland’s first and only regional nonprofit dedicated exclusively to renter outreach, education, organizing and advocacy.

The Renters Alliance is in favor of **HB129—Mold Remediation**, and we thank Delegate Shaneka Henson for her leadership in sponsoring this legislation.

The Renters Alliance with increasing regularity hears from tenants about mold complaints. These complaints include mold growing across walls, in bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens, and family rooms. Renters often ask landlords and property managers for assistance, only to find their complaints are ignored, or mold remediation amount to painting it over until it grows back.

In one community we work with, the mold was so bad that the local elementary school noted that most of the children living in the apartment complex were suffering from asthma exacerbated by mold exposure, and unable to play sports.

In another building the constant dampness due to pipe leaks and poor heating and ventilation systems was so bad that MUSHROOMS sprouted in the hallways as mold climbed the walls of apartment homes.



In senior buildings where mold infestations frequently go unabated, residents complain of wheezing, headaches, skin irritation, watering eyes and constant cough.

Mold is a growing health hazard for renters and its abatement and control must be required by law with no less mandate than how we require the extermination of rats and vermin.

As we continue to see a rise in damp weather from rising temperatures, as well as from apartment communities with leaking pipes and poor maintenance, renters are increasingly vulnerable to mold infestations.

We strongly urge a favorable report.

Thank you

###