

HB 1061 Letter of Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Collins, Reuben

Position: FAV



Charles County Government

CHARLES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., *President*
Bobby Rucci, *Vice President*
Gilbert O. Bowling, III
Thomasina O. Coates, M.S.
Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed.

Mark Belton
County Administrator

March 12, 2021

The Hon. Kumar P. Barve, Chairman
Environment and Transportation Committee
Committee Members
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: House Bill 1061 - Southern Maryland – Multifamily Dwelling Registration – Fees and Fines

Dear Chairman Barve, Vice Chairwoman Stein, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

The purpose of this written testimony is to express **SUPPORT** for HB 1061- Southern Maryland – Multifamily Dwelling Registration – Fees and Fines, with existing amendments.

This bill will enable the Commissioners of Charles County to establish a registration and inspection program for residential dwelling units offered for rent. With the passage of this bill, and should the Commissioners pass a local law, rental units may be subject to a fee for registration with the County and an inspection to ensure the condition of residential rental properties is proper for human habitation.

Charles County has documented an increase in citizen complaints related to unsafe living conditions in tenant-occupied residences. These complaints include, but are not limited to, faulty electrical work, broken plumbing, missing smoke alarms, and makeshift bedrooms without proper egress. While all of these items are clearly violations of existing minimum livability standards within Maryland law, the County does not have a mechanism to identify rental units and ensure they are meeting the standards. In other words, our current process is reactive rather than proactive. A registration program would allow us to implement inspection and the enforcement processes needed to keep all of our residential tenants safe, and bring substandard housing into the light and into compliance. We are particularly concerned for our low-income residents, who may suffer with unsafe living conditions, and do not file complaints for fear of rent increases or retribution by landlords.

Conversely, we believe that a registration program will also be an added benefit to our upstanding landlords as an acknowledgement of the good condition the dwelling was in at the time of rental.

We are satisfied with the amendments to H.B. 1061 that now allows for the legislation to cover all residential units offered for rent as opposed to being limited to multifamily dwellings. For the reasons herein provided, the Board of Commissioners for Charles County supports H.B. 1061.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RBC', with a horizontal line underneath.

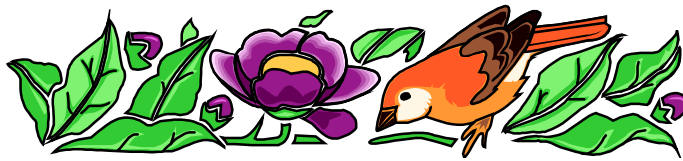
Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President
County Commissioners of Charles County

cc: Charles County Legislative Delegation

HB1061.pdf

Uploaded by: Washington, Sandy

Position: FAV



LifeStyles, Inc.

February 11, 2021

To; Charles County Delegation

From: Sandy Washington
LifeStyles of Maryland, Inc.
Executive Director

Subject: Written Testimony on HB 1061

Please accept our written testimony regarding HB 1061. LifeStyles, Inc. is a non-profit that has served the Southern Maryland area for over twenty-six years. While LifeStyles is focused on housing and homelessness, we recognize the importance of establishing a standard for habitable living. Oftentimes a bad dwelling is not better than no dwelling. Please note we know folks that literally have to crawl into their living space. There is no heat, no air, and no running water. While they are paying rent, they do not have a home. They have a place to lay their heads.

We must assure that those receiving funds for rental property are meeting and adhering to a form of accountability. HB-1061 will address this. While we want to encourage landlords to continue to provide housing for those in need, guidelines and safety measures must be in place. Landlords should have a sense of pride in the dwellings being provided. A sense of pride may be subjective therefore mandates must be put in place. Unless we enact legislation such as HB 1061 substandard living situations will continue.

Process and procedures can be developed through collaborative efforts between all parties; however, it should not be a barrier to enacting this legislation.

Sincerely,

Sandy O. Washington
Executive Director

LifeStyles of Maryland Foundation, Inc.
101 Catalpa Drive, Suite 103
P.O. Box 1794
La Plata, Maryland 20646
www.lifestylesofmd.org
301-609-9900/301-609-9800 (Fax)
866-293-0623 Toll Free

Charles Co Chair Written Testimony RE HB 1061.pdf

Uploaded by: Patterson, Edith

Position: FWA

SENATOR ARTHUR ELLIS
SENATE CHAIR

SENATOR MICHAEL A. JACKSON



DELEGATE EDITH J. PATTERSON, ED.D.
HOUSE CHAIR

DELEGATE DEBRA DAVIS
DELEGATE ELIZABETH "SUSIE" PROCTOR
DELEGATE C. T. WILSON

THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
CHARLES COUNTY DELEGATION

March 16, 2021

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1061: Southern Maryland Dwelling Registration and Inspection Fees and Fines

Good afternoon Chairman Kumar Barve, Vice-Chairman Dana Stein and Members of the Environment & Transportation Committee:

For the record, I'm Delegate Edith Patterson, Chair of the Charles County Delegation, presenting HB 1061 – Southern Maryland Dwelling Registration and Inspection Fees and Fines legislation. This bill seeks to authorize Charles County, the only Code Home Rule Class County in Southern Maryland, to conduct inspections on certain properties and to impose a fine on a property owner who leases a dwelling that is in violation of certain inspection criteria.

Passage of this legislation will aid the county's ability to enforce safe and proper maintenance of rental dwellings. Further, the legislation authorizes the county the ability to require property owners of a dwelling unit located in the county to register with the county in order to offer a lease; charge the property owner a registration fee; conduct inspections of a dwelling unit that is registered with the county to enforce minimum property maintenance standards; and impose a fine on a property owner that leases or is in violation of the inspection criteria established by the county.

Amendments 1 and 2 represent clarification of intent offered by the county.

The Charles County delegation supports this legislation as does the Charles County Board of Commissioners. We ask for a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Edith J. Patterson".

Delegate Edith J. Patterson, Ed.D.
House Chair, Charles County Delegation
Legislative District 28, Charles County

MBIA Testimony HB 1061.pdf

Uploaded by: Graf, Lori

Position: UNF

March 16, 2021

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve
Environment & Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251,
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD, 21401

RE: HB 1061 – Southern Maryland – Multi Family Dwelling Registration

Dear Chairman Barve:

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 1,100 member firms statewide, appreciates the opportunity to participate in discussion on **HB 1061 – Southern Maryland – Multi Family Dwelling Registration**. MBIA respectfully OPPOSES the bill.

The bill would authorize the code home rule counties of the Southern Maryland to require a certain property owner to register certain property with the county in order to offer the property for lease. The bill would stall growth in the county and could lead to unintended consequences across Southern Maryland. It will make landlords want to dump their rentals and negatively affect the already low inventory & higher priced rentals, while increasing rents on existing due to supply and demand.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure an UNFAVORABLE report however take our concerns in to consideration. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: Members of the House Environment & Transportation Committee

Charles Rental Housing Survey Results.pdf

Uploaded by: Kuhns, Theresa

Position: INFO



Rental Housing Survey Results

Presenters

Don Litten, Building Code Official

Danielle Mitchell, Associate County Attorney

March 9, 2021

Rental Housing Survey

In response to feedback garnered from the Board of Commissioners, a survey was made available on the Planning and Growth Management webpage titled “Proposed Rental Housing Licensing Program Survey” beginning December 1, 2020 through January 31, 2021.

The survey link was prominently displayed on the CCG website. An announcement was also included in our CCG e-newsletter. 172 submissions were received during the survey period.

Rental Housing Survey Questions

Question 1. What best describes you?

Response Options:

1. Apartment Tenant: **9**

2. Apartment Landlord- 3 units or less: **1**

3. Apartment Landlord- 4 units or more: **1**

4. Single Family Tenant: **7**

5. Single Family Landlord: **39**

If Single Family Landlord, how many townhomes do you offer for rent? How many detached single family homes do you offer for rent?

6. Property Manager: **20**

7. Property Owner, not offering property for rent: **60**

8. Other - If Other, please explain: **35**

Rental Housing Survey Questions

Question 2. If you are a Landlord, how long have you been a Landlord in Charles County?

39 Landlords:

2 years – 3

3 years - 2

4 years - 4

5 years – 5

7 years – 1

9 years - 1

10 years -2

11 years - 1

12 years – 1

15 years – 2

16 years - 3

18 years - 1

20 years - 1

20+ years - 1

24 years - 1

25 years - 1

30 years - 1

34 years - 1

35 years - 1

40 years – 2

45 years - 1

Rental Housing Survey Questions

Question 3. If you are a Tenant, how long have you been a Tenant in Charles County?

9 Apartment Tenants:

1 year - 1
2 years - 1
3 years - 2
5 years - 1
8 years - 1
13 years - 1
20+ years - 1
40 years - 1

7 Single Family Tenants:

2 years - 1
3 years - 1
4 years - 1
6 years - 1
8 years - 1
12 years - 1

Rental Housing Survey Questions

Question 4. If you are a Tenant or a Landlord, is the property you rent or offer for rent located in a community with a Homeowners' Association?

NO - 34

YES - 44

If yes, does the Homeowners' Association have any rules or regulations concerning rentals?

NO - 25

YES - 18

Rental Housing Survey Questions

Question 5. What are your greatest concerns about Charles County's rental properties? (choose all that apply.)

Response Options	Apt Tenant	Apt Landlord	Other	Property Mgr	Property Owner- Not for Rent	Single Family Landlord	Single Family Tenant	TOTAL
Burdensome regulation:	3	11	26	17	34	24	0	115
Property maintenance	4	1	10	4	23	6	2	50
Building Safety	4	0	9	2	13	4	0	32
Safety in the surrounding area	4	0	7	8	29	8	5	61
Unresponsive Management or Landlord	3	0	11	2	17	2	1	36
Unresponsive Tenant		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cost of Rent	7	1	20	6	24	16	2	76
Lack of Affordable Units	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	1	1	1	8	0	11

Rental Housing Survey Questions

Question 6. On what areas of regulations should this program focus? (Choose all that apply.)

Response Options	Apt Tenant	Apt Landlord	Other	Property Mgr	Property Owner- Not for Rent	Single Family Landlord	Single Family Tenant	TOTAL
Crime free/Drug free residences	6	2	22	10	34	16	5	95
Buildings interior	4	0	8	3	19	3	2	39
Buildings exterior	4	0	9	3	21	7	0	44
Educating Tenants and Landlords about Regulations	2	2	19	7	28	9	3	70
Other	0	0	5	5	7	17	0	34

Rental Housing Survey Questions

Question 7. What are your greatest concerns about the County implementing a Rental Housing Licensing Program?

Response Options	Apt Tenant	Apt Landlord	Other	Property Mgr	Property Owner-Not for Rent	Single Family Landlord	Single Family Tenant	TOTAL
1.Burdensome regulation	3	2	31	18	39	31	0	124
2.Property inspections	1	1	13	8	20	21	1	65
3.Additional costs to Landlords	3	2	29	18	39	35	0	126
4.If this is a concern, please identify what may be the source of potential additional costs, if known								
5.Additional costs to Tenants (If this is a concern, please identify what may be the source of potential additional costs, if known)	8	2	24	16	33	24	5	112

Rental Housing Survey Questions

QUESTION 7 CONTINUED

Response Options	Apt Tenant	Apt Landlord	Other	Property Mgr	Property Owner- Not for Rent	Single Family Landlord	Single Family Tenant	TOTAL
6. Legal Ramifications	1	2	14	11	22	18	0	68
7. Loss of rental units to avoid program	2	2	26	15	31	24	3	103
8. Sharing information with a government agency	3	1	10	6	12	12	0	44
9. Sharing information with other entities 10. Other - If other, please explain	3	1	11	7	13	12	0	47

Rental Housing Survey Questions

Question 8. Please share any additional information or your opinion about a rental housing licensing program:

- “The additional program will result in the need for more County Staff to manage the applications and inspection process resulting in larger Government and additional budget requirements for the department.
- My concern about this program is it will create another layer of bureaucracy and drive the cost of rental housing even higher than it is now”
- “Questions: 1. Cost of the registration fee? 2. Documentation of the number of below standard rental units or units violate housing standards? Comment - there already is opposition from the Southern Maryland Association of REALTORS, including a mailing, stating that this program will lead to fewer rental units and label this as a renters tax. They cite the 2018 United Way of Charles County ALICE Report, but perhaps out of context. No bill has been filed yet, so perhaps their opposition is somewhat premature without at least reviewing the fiscal impact note that will be available after the bill is filed, to fully understand the costs and then perhaps a basis to determine the availability and cost of housing. Also, perhaps there is an upside - making housing safer for habitation! “
- “Sub-standard properties being rented to low income tenants would be taken off the market rather than improved and licensed.”
- “Don't want it!”
- “Great idea. This will ensure upkeep of property and ensure property values do not decline. It will also provide a way to hold landlords accountable to resolving complaints. “

Rental Housing Survey Questions

QUESTION 8 CONTINUED

- “There are federal programs in place and a local housing authority. The county does not need to drive up taxes and add more inane bureaucracy. Use the federal programs more effectively. The proposal is a taking of private property without due process.”
- “I think now is not the time for it. I don't think it's needed. Some landlords will sell and move to their areas, others will increase the rent to offset cost. “
- “It would be nice to know what the goal is of implementing such a licensing program. What problem does this correct in the County?”
- “The demographic info asked for below is a perfect example of what is going wrong with this country. Male and female is the only gender - the others don't exist!!!!!!”
- “long over due. Do not pass regulations unless you intend to enforce. Do not handle like you have done house trailers. Many illegal trailers are rental units!”
- “Property managers and property owners will not like this program but they are running a business and all businesses must follow laws. Tenants need to have a way to resolve issues with landlord of course the landlord will not renew their contracts. I know many landlords who will not replace broken appliance or maintain the property, they try to get renters to buy or make repairs. Landlords take advantage of renters especially pet owners know they can't go to another home. How do I keep informed about this issue.”
- “Should not be issued”
- “It will drive the prices up in the Charles County rental industry causing low-income households to leave due to the costs applied to the lease of a rental associated with the Rental Housing Licensing Program.”

Rental Housing Survey Questions

Question 9. Please share your demographic information.

Gender: M or F

FEMALE – 85 PREFER NOT TO ANSWER – 21 MALE – 58

Age- 18-24: 1, 25-34: 8, 35-44:17 , 45-54: 40, 55-64: 47, 65 and older: 22

Ethnic origin: White: 78, Hispanic/Latino: 2, Black/African American: 52, Native American/ American Indian: 2, Asian/Pacific Islander: 2, Other: 13

Questions?



Charles County Government

MD Relay Service: 7-1-1

Equal Opportunity Employer

It is the policy of Charles County to provide equal employment opportunity to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religious or political affiliation or opinion, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity or expression, or any other status protected by law.

www.CharlesCountyMD.gov



FinalENTTestimonyHB106131621.pdf

Uploaded by: Kuhns, Theresa

Position: INFO



8440 Old Leonardtown Road, Suite 211, Hughesville, MD 20637
1-888-340-8727 • (301) 274-4406 • Fax: (240) 254-2107
info@somdrealtors.com • www.somdrealtors.com

President
Tanya Redding

President-Elect
Gregg Kantak

Vice President
Bernadette Cole

Secretary/Treasurer
Camisha Jonas

Immediate Past President
Chris Hill

CEO
Richard J. Marshall

March 11, 2021

House Environment and Transportation Committee

Room 251, House Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Southern Maryland Association of Realtors®, representing over 1,800 industry professionals who continually advocate for over 170,000 property owners in the region, I want to make you aware of our concerns with HB1061/SB832, as well as strongly urge you to **REJECT** amendment # **516811/1** to change the scope of the bill, by including a single room rented in a property and single-family properties along with multi-family properties.

The Southern Maryland Association of Realtors® has concerns with the creation of a registration program with unspecific, multiple fees, levied fines, and new codes of living, which will be passed on to tenants and small landlords.

We support the intent to create housing opportunities which are safe and fair, but respectfully ask for you to heavily consider the following in your deliberations:

- Studies have shown that 15% of property owners remove their rental units in markets where policies have these impacts. You and I both know, that if this type of legislation is enacted in Charles County, we will potentially lose 2,250 rental units.
- We also know the housing affordability crisis along with constrained supply issues that impact us in Maryland, including Charles County, put as many as 38% of our county residents in a position of being one catastrophic event away from becoming homeless. (*Source United Way Alice Report*)

With just these two points alone, we should expect landlords to take advantage of the low housing supply on the market and sell their property, rather than continuing to provide rental options. The current fiscal note is only accounting for approximately 20% of total units effected, prior to any amendment altering the scope of the original legislation. As noted in the attached recent Charles County Rental Survey, 178 respondents (including both tenants and landlords) indicated a loss of 103 rental units.



"The Voice for Real Estate in Southern Maryland"
Member – National Association of REALTORS® and Maryland Association of REALTORS®
The term REALTOR® is a registered collective membership mark that identifies a real estate professional who is a member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and subscribes to its strict Code of Ethics.



As these transitions occur, the housing market for those seeking residency will be overextended, we will lose residents, tax revenues will decrease, all leading to a devastating economic downturn, impacting all of us in Charles County.

As Realtors®, we take an oath to protect and promote fair housing, we are not afforded to remain inactive on this bill, which will likely displace hundreds of families. It is imperative and we respectfully urge you to **REJECT** the amendment.

Respectfully,

Tanya Redding