

HB 451 Sen.pdf

Uploaded by: Castelli, William

Position: FAV



House Bill 451 – Real Property – Residential Rental Property Inspection – Remote Visual Inspection

Position: Support

Maryland REALTORS® supports HB 451 which requires local governments to establish remote inspections during protracted states of emergency or other dangerous conditions that prevent in person inspections.

A number of local municipalities have established remote inspections that allow the locality to inspect conditions inside a property. Some of these programs permit a tenant or property manager to provide the video at the direction of the local inspector. The inspections provide timely review of conditions of the property and help reduce tenant and property manager's exposure to COVID-19 or future dangers.

The House amended the language to be more expansive than just video and to require an actual inspection of the property before a sanction is placed on the owner of the property. The Maryland REALTORS® supports these changes.

For these reasons, the Maryland REALTORS® recommend a favorable report.

**For more information contact bill.castelli@mdrealtor.org or
susan.mitchell@mdrealtor.org or lisa.may@mdrealtor.org**

MBIA Testimony HB 451.pdf

Uploaded by: Graf, Lori

Position: FAV

March 17, 2021

The Honorable William C. Smith Jr.
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
Miller Senate Office Building,
2 East Wing 11 Bladen St.,
Annapolis, MD, 21401

RE: HB 451 Real Property – Residential Rental Property Inspection – Remote Video Inspection

Dear Chairman Smith:

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 1,100 member firms statewide, appreciates the opportunity to participate in the HB 451 Real Property – Residential Rental Property Inspection – Remote Video Inspection. MBIA Supports the Act in its current version.

This measure requires local jurisdictions to allow video inspections, where practicable, on residential rental properties. MBIA supports this measure. Due to the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, residential inspections come with a greater hazard than they have recently. In addition, the establishment of video inspections would make the process of evaluating the value of a property more efficient which ultimately results in a lower cost to bring the property to market.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure a favorable report. 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 Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Delegate Henson's Testimony HB0451.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Henson, Delegate

Position: FAV

SHANEKA HENSON
Legislative District 30A
Anne Arundel County

Appropriations Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Chairman William C. Smith, Jr.
Vice Chair Jeff Waldstreicher
2 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Good afternoon Honorable Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present to you HB451 entitled “Real Property - Residential Rental Property Inspection Remote Video Inspection”. I am asking for your support.

Remote Video Inspections (RVI) is an invention of efficiency, and safety. RVI is a virtual means of inspecting properties, specific to this bill, rental properties. You will find in the written and oral testimony support from the Attorney General’s Office Consumer Protection Division, MD Multi Housing Association with a friendly amendment (if it’s the will of the committee), companies from the commercial industry and most probative in my estimation, testimony from one of the many jurisdictions that have already adopted this legislation. The town of Shaker Heights, OH in their testimony laid out what’s been a successful RVI process that they’ve adopted using free, publicly available Google duo software.

RVI is a practical solution to streamlining rental housing inspections to increase local housing quality and inspection safety. Let’s bring MD up to speed with Florida, Ohio, and Arizona and Canada have successfully implemented RVI.

There is opposition to this bill, but I’d like to point out:

It does not impose a new duty to inspect, it applies only to existing inspections, it only adds in limited circumstance a new methodology

The bill has provisions to account for feasibility and privacy

It is with these reasons in mind that I ask that the committee provide your favorable vote on HB451.

Thank you,

Delegate Shaneka Henson

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Shaneka Henson".

Testimony HB451.pdf

Uploaded by: Konys, Paul

Position: FAV



SHAKER HEIGHTS

January 29, 2021

RE: HB0451 entitled "Real Property - Residential Rental Property Inspection - Remote Video Inspection"

To Whom It May Concern,

The City of Shaker Heights implemented an RVI program in March of 2020 in response to the pandemic for both permit inspections as well as rental and Point of Sale (POS) inspections. The Governor of Ohio determined that the building construction industry was an essential service that needed to be provided to the residents, business owners and contractors in Ohio.

In an attempt to maintain uninterrupted service to the residents of Shaker Heights, we adopted Remote Video Inspections utilizing the application, Google Duo. It is free application that is supported by Windows, Android, and Apple products. Inspectors are able to conduct inspections from a web browser on a computer.

By using RVI, the Building Department was able to perform our field inspections in both residential and commercial construction projects all the while minimizing our contact with contractors and homeowners. This decision ensured that the building trades would continue to operate and minimized health risk to all parties involved.

To date, thousands of inspections have been performed with positive response from our residents and contractors. Homeowners appreciate our new practice as way to protect them from unnecessary contact and as well protecting our employees.

In practice, the use of RVI has increased the productivity of the department by eliminating drive time and reducing operating expenses. The inspectors work from home, reducing their travel to work and contact with other municipal workers. The RVI system has been most successful and will like remain an important tool for building code enforcement in Shaker Heights, even after the pandemic.

We have reviewed the proposed HB0451 Real Property- Residential Rental Property Inspection- Remote Video Inspection, and strongly support its adoption.

Sincerely,

Paul Konys, Building Official

Kyle Krewson, Director of Building and Housing

CITY OF SHAKER HEIGHTS | *Building and Housing*

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HB 0451 Maryland Testimony from Blitzz's CEO.pdf

Uploaded by: Sreenivasan, Ramaswamy

Position: FAV



TO: The Honorable Kumar P. Barve, Chair
Members, House Environment and Transportation Committee The Honorable
Shaneka Henson

FROM: Ramaswamy Sreenvisan, Ph.D.

DATE: March 15th, 2021

RE: SUPPORT – HB0451 titled “Real Property - Residential Rental Property Inspection - Remote Video Inspection”

On behalf of Blitzz Inc, we submit this letter of support for House Bill HB0451

House Bill 0451 would allow rental properties in MD to be inspected with remote video inspections. This will allow for safer and more efficient inspections.

As a scientist who graduated with P.hd. from the University of Maryland, College Park, and now having founded Blitzz, Inc it behooves me to offer this testimony in favor of this bill and give back to the community where I pursued my Phd. I have been fortunate enough, along with our employees, to be of service to my local communities, it's cities and counties in California where I now reside, by providing them with Remote Video Inspection Technology during these challenging times of the pandemic.

Several Cities and counties in California and beyond, having successfully been using remote video to safely inspect residential and commercial entities for over 20 different inspection types. These include inspections involving the the following:

1. Porches
2. Small Projects
3. Rooftop Solar (photovoltaic)
4. Electrical Service Upgrades
5. Electrical Reconnects
6. Water Heaters
7. Gas Line Installations
8. Parking Shade Structures
9. Residential Construction (except roof nailing and intermediates)
10. Follow-up Inspections (must verify with inspector)
11. Aluminum Patio Cover
12. Water Softener
13. Plumbing Re-Pipe
14. Gas Line Extension for BBQ and Fire Pits

15. A/C Change Out
16. Attic FAU
17. Main Line Water Repair
18. Electrical Service Change
19. Spa Circuit
20. Detached Storage Sheds

The list of inspection use cases is growing every day as inspectors and city officials realize the efficiency of remote video in avoiding wasted driving time and waiting time by the homeowner, the general contractor and even the inspector. And it's not just the Building Department that is showing interest, Public Works, Fire and Safety, Water, and others are all realizing the efficiency and safety benefits.

Most of the above use cases take a few minutes by the inspector even on a remote video session. The platform does not even require app to be downloaded and places no technological burden on either the inspector or the GC or the home/business owner other than owning a smartphone.

Bottomline: this modality saves millions of taxpayer dollars every year, cuts down driving and hence carbon emissions and lets inspectors spend more time with their families instead of being stuck on the road driving around especially for simple use cases where they don't have to be on site.

Passage of House Bill 0451 will create a much needed beneficial shift in the way inspectors do their work for relevant use cases.

- [This video](https://vimeo.com/449766876) (<https://vimeo.com/449766876>) is a testimonial from a senior inspector in the Bay Area.
- [This video](#) is a recorded video testimony incase I am not able to make it to the Zoom testimonial session. The notice was short(< 2 days) and hence this effort to give you a backup oral testimony.

For more information call:
Ramaswamy Sreenivasan,
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rama@getblitzz.com

House Bill 451 - MMHA - Fav.pdf

Uploaded by: Wiggins, Grason

Position: FAV



House Bill 451

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Date: March 17, 2021

Position: **Favorable**

This testimony is offered on behalf of the Maryland Multi-Housing Association (MMHA). MMHA is a professional trade association established in 1996, whose members consist of owners and managers of more than 210,000 rental housing homes in over 958 apartment communities. Our members house over 538,000 residents of the State of Maryland. MMHA also represents over 250 associate member companies who supply goods and services to the multi-housing industry.

House Bill 451 provides local jurisdictions with authority to conduct remote video inspections of a property or an element of a property during a protracted state of emergency declared by the Governor and in response to a complaint by a tenant of a dangerous or hazardous condition in a residential rental property during a severe weather event or a state of emergency of any length declared by the Governor that prevents or renders inadvisable an in-person inspections. Further, the bill establishes certain requirements that local jurisdictions must undertake during their adoption of provisions to implement the video inspection program.

House Bill 451 is a timely bill that ensures local jurisdictions have the authority to conduct necessary inspections during emergencies. Further, the sponsor worked with MMHA to develop an amendment to the bill in the House, and MMHA thanks the sponsor for meeting and working with our organization to reach a friendly resolution. For this reason, MMHA respectfully requests a favorable report from the committee with amendments on House Bill 451.

HB451_Letter of Support_(2021)(FINAL).pdf

Uploaded by: Wilpone-Welborn, Kira

Position: FAV

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Attorney General

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*Chief Deputy Attorney
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CAROLYN QUATTROCKI
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WILLIAM D. GRUHN
Chief
Consumer Protection
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STATE OF MARYLAND
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March 15, 2021

To: The Honorable William C. Smith
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: Kira Wilpone-Welborn
Consumer Protection Division

Re: House Bill 451 – Real Property – Residential Rental Property Inspection – Remote Video
Inspection (SUPPORT)

The Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General submits the following written testimony in support of House Bill 451. This bill provides for remote visual inspections of residential rental property during a protracted state of emergency declared by the Governor or a severe weather event which renders an in-person inspection inadvisable.

Inspections are often necessary when there is a problem with a rental property causing hazardous conditions to exist. However, during the pandemic, such inspections have been complicated by the desire of individuals to be safe in their property and the availability of inspectors who are willing to enter a residence. The Consumer Protection Division received many calls during the current pandemic in which tenants expressed concerns about admitting a landlord and/or his agent into their property. These calls are difficult due to the conflicting concerns, which are reasonable on the part of each party.

This bill directs local jurisdictions with the assistance of the Maryland Department of Labor to adopt regulations calculated to permit remote visual inspections that are substantially comparable to on-site visits. Having the ability to conduct inspections remotely ensures that inspections of hazardous conditions can be conducted safely and fairly while initiating the repair process without delay.

For these reasons, we ask that the Judicial Proceedings Committee return a favorable report on this bill.

cc: Members, Environment and Transportation Committee

HB 451_INFO_MML SENATE.pdf

Uploaded by: Fiore, Justin

Position: INFO



Maryland Municipal League

The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

March 17, 2021

Committee: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Bill: HB 451 – Real Property – Residential Rental Property Inspection – Remote Video Inspection

Position: Informational

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League opposed HB 451 as introduced. The bill would have required municipalities to adopt and carry out remote video inspections during a protracted state of emergency. Municipalities already have the authority to conduct remote inspections and most have been doing so regularly throughout the pandemic. Some members are conducting these inspections through photos as opposed to video for privacy reasons. Smaller members, that may not have the training or equipment to adequately conduct video inspections, have developed other protocol to keep residents safe during these times. As amended in the House, the League agreed to remove its opposition.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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Justin Fiore

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