



**Bill Title:** House Bill 263, Real Property – Nuisance Actions – Rodent Harborage

**Committee:** Environment & Transportation

**Date:** February 2, 2022

**Position:** Unfavorable

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 263 permits a nuisance action against a property owner for damages caused by rodent harborage. The court may award compensatory and punitive damages to a prevailing plaintiff.

House Bill 263 solely holds a property owner responsible despite the potential conduct of a resident in a single family dwelling or multi-family environment. Residential housing providers work hard to provide safe, habitable, and quality housing, certainly free of rodent harborage. Subjecting the property owner to compensatory and punitive damages for conduct outside their control is patently unfair. How can a property owner be held responsible for a problem that is not reported by the resident?

For these reasons, we respectfully request an unfavorable report on House Bill 263.

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