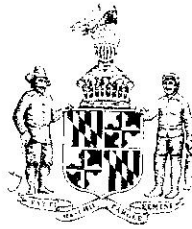


RONALD N. YOUNG
Legislative District 3
Frederick County

Budget and Taxation Committee
Chair, Executive Nominations Committee

Senate Chair, Joint Subcommittee on
Program Open Space/Agricultural Land
Preservation

Joint Committee on Administrative,
Executive, and Legislative Review



The Senate of Maryland

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 3, 2022

SB034 - SUPPORT

Public Safety - Residential Elevators – Inspections

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Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

SB034 seeks to add residential elevator inspections to state law. Maryland law currently only requires inspections of commercial and public building elevators.

The federal Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that residential elevators are linked to 4,600 injuries and 22 deaths from 1981 through 2019.⁷ However a 2007 study, using the CPSC's National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS) data puts elevator-related injuries much higher at 29,030 for children age 19 and younger from 1990 to 2004, or an average of 1,935 injuries per year.⁹

While the total number of Maryland children injured or killed by elevators is unknown, it was the death of a Maryland child in 2001 that forced the Otis Elevator Company to recall home elevators made before 2012 for inspection and repairs.^{4,6} All the studies agree that the most frequent cause of injury is an elevator door closing on a body part, most often when children get caught and crushed between the door and the elevator carriage.⁸ An issue that is easily remedied by reducing the space to the standard of 4 inches or less (small children are too big to fit into a 4 inch space).⁵ Maryland thankfully adopted into law the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) safety standards of 4 inch gaps for elevators. Unfortunately, it only applies to elevators that are inspected.

Furthermore, the ASME codes only apply to elevators installed after 2017, leaving the 300,000 to 500,000 currently installed residential elevators in the United States uninspected.⁵ It's unclear how many of these elevators are in Maryland, because while the Maryland Department of Labor tracks the number of commercial elevators by county and location, it was not able to provide a similar list for private residential elevators.

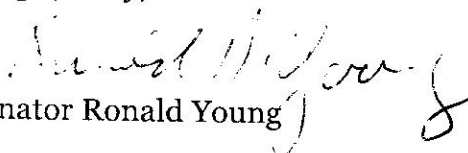
In July 2021, the CPSC issued its first ever safety recall for residential elevators due to the danger posed to children.⁶ But the CPSC recall only involves only about 5,000 home elevators out of the estimated 300,000 to 500,000 installed elevators.⁶ Furthermore, only one manufacturer, Otis Elevator Co., voluntarily agreed to the recall, even though the problem is seen across the industry and comes on the heels of a CPSC lawsuit against another elevator company, ThyssenKrupp.⁷

SB034 seeks to correct this safety issue by requiring inspections upon installation and each time the home changes ownership. When this bill was introduced last year, the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulations (DLLR) raised concerns that home elevator inspections may increase the State elevator inspectors backlog. SB034 addresses this concern by providing that the inspections are conducted by a third-party private elevator inspection company, licensed by the State of Maryland. In addition, the cost of inspection, repairs, and upgrades are paid by the homeowner, if the repair is not already covered by a CPSC recall.

I offer an amendment to add Senator Benson as a cosponsor of the bill.

I ask that you vote favorably on **SB034** to correct this public safety issue, particularly for our children.

Respectfully,


Senator Ronald Young

Additional Information

States that required in-home elevator inspections ^{12, 13}

California

Massachusetts

Minnesota

New York

Oklahoma

Washington

Resources

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