



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

January 25, 2022

**Testimony in Support of House Bill 257 -Residential Elevators - Inspections**

Good Afternoon Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chairman, and members of the Economic Matters Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about House Bill 257 - Residential Elevators - Inspections.

Under Maryland law, all elevators in Maryland must be registered with the Commissioner of Labor and Industry and are subject to annual inspections and more extensive examinations every five years. Currently, elevators in private, residential homes are exempt from registration and inspections. House Bill 257 stipulates that residential elevators shall be included under this existing law that already applies to commercial elevators.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has reported that 22 people have died in residential elevator accidents since 1981, with most of the fatalities being children (Mass, 2021). Many more individuals have sustained substantial injuries in these accidents. In fact, according to a study published in *Clinical Pediatrics*, from 1990 to 2004 the estimated amount of elevator-related injuries among children was 29,030 (O’Neil, et al., 2007). In the summer of 2021, the CPSC filed a lawsuit against one home elevator company that had been involved in three separate accidents: 1) a 2-year-old child died in 2017, 2) a 3-year-old child was permanently disabled in 2010, and 3) a 4-year-old boy was hospitalized in 2019 after being crushed (CPSC, 2021).

The main catalyst for these injuries is the ability for children, given their small size, to be caught in between the door and the elevator carriage. Maryland law already accounts for this hazard for commercial elevators, and adopted the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) safety standards of 4-inch gaps for elevators (installed after 2017), the standard recommended to ensure small children cannot fit into the space. It is estimated that since home elevators are not included in current law, around 300,000 to 500,000 residential elevators in the U.S. are not inspected (Frankel, 2020). And although CPSC has finally instituted the first ever safety recall for residential elevators, it only applies to around 5,000 residential elevators (Frankel, 2021).

Further, to address the concerns raised against previous versions of this bill, mainly that these additional inspections would result in substantial backlogs, House Bill 257 prescribes that these inspections be carried out by a third-party, rather than the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulations (DLLR). The costs are to be paid by the homeowner.

House Bill 257 would prevent these senseless accidents, primarily endured by children, by bringing residential elevators up to code with Maryland law that already applies to our commercial elevators in the state. I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 257.

## REFERENCES

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