



House Bill 323 – Real Property – Limitations on Summoning Law Enforcement or Emergency Services - Prohibition

Position: Favorable

Maryland REALTORS® support HB 323 which seeks to prohibit local laws that limit the ability of a tenant to summon emergency services like law enforcement.

Maryland REALTORS® have property managers and landlords that are familiar with local laws like the Hagerstown ordinance which penalizes property owners when a tenant calls for emergency services multiple times. The Hagerstown law has different triggers depending upon the number of units in the rental building but can be as few as 2-3 complaints in a single year. If a property is considered a nuisance, the owner of the property may be fined hundreds of dollars.

While the intent of these laws is to deter individuals who abuse local emergency services for non-emergency situations, there are many reasons that an individual may call emergency services multiple times in a single year for actual emergencies. A tenant, for example, may have an abusive, former partner that visits despite the tenant's direction or the tenant may have a chronic health condition which triggers emergency services.

HB 323 was further amended and narrowed by the House to ensure that its application would target those conditions outside of the tenant and landlord's control but clarify that parking complaints, excessive noise complaints and the habitability of the property are not such conditions.

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

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