

SB 0970 - SUPPORT  
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SB 0970 SUPPORT  
Fire Protection and Prevention- Sprinkler Systems and Smoke Alarms-  
Requirements (Melanie Diaz Sprinklers Save Lives Act)

March 15, 2023

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

We write in support of the Melanie Diaz Sprinklers Save Lives Act (SB 0970). As the direct family of Melanie Diaz, we find it critical that the legislature takes actions in order to protect and prevent detrimental scenarios similar to that of which have taken Melanie's life, from happening to other people in the future.

On February 18th, 2023 we lost our loving daughter, sister, and friend to many due to a fire in her high-rise apartment building in Silver Spring, Maryland. This tragedy left many residents displaced, multiple injuries, and of course the devastating loss of Melanie and her two dogs Ella and Samantha.


Melanie was a ray of sunshine, always bringing brightness and positivity to those around her. Our family was lucky to have been able to spend 25 beautiful years with her, but are absolutely crushed that we will be spending the rest without her. There is no way for anyone to prepare for the pain of losing a loved one, especially one whose life was still so fresh and new. However, when there are ways to prevent tragedies such as the one our family has been living since that dreadful day, why not take that to our advantage?

We strongly believe that the awareness about fire safety, protocol, and protection equipment would have likely changed the outcome of this incident, and Melanie would be here with us to fight for this change. Soon after this event, Maryland State Fire Marshal Brian Geraci exclaimed that even one sprinkler head could have prevented the spreading of this deadly fire. If information like this is known by Fire professionals, then we should be applying it to prevent future tragedy and loss of those we love. This would include implementing sprinkler and alarm systems in our high-rise buildings, as well as safety solutions for those who are visual and/or hearing impaired. The sooner we make the change, the sooner we make a difference. 2023 is too late, how many lives will be lost if we wait until 2033?

Imagine taking a walk in our shoes as we grieve the loss of our daughter and sister Melanie, and allow that to fuel your want to make a difference in future fire prevention.

We urge a favorable report on SB 0970.

  
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