



Committee: Environment and Transportation
Testimony on: HB0303 - Baltimore City - Air Conditioning in Residential Rental Unit
Organization: Climate Justice Wing of the Maryland Legislative Coalition
Submitting: Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: March 10, 2023

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB303. The Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB303 including the sponsor's amendments.

HB303 requires landlords of residential rental units in Baltimore City to provide air conditioning, between June 1- September 30 each year, if at least one resident in the unit is 3 or younger or 65 or older. The landlord must maintain cooling systems they control at no greater than 80 degrees Fahrenheit (F) or provide and maintain an air conditioning system controlled by the tenant that can reliably cool the unit to no greater than 80 degrees F.

Maryland is already experiencing the effects of climate change, including getting hotter overall. The average annual temperature in the State has risen nearly 4 degrees F above the average temperature between 1895-1915. Both day and nighttime temperatures are getting hotter. From 1970 – 2016, the number of days over 95 degrees F rose by 3.7 days. The number of nights with temperatures above 75 degrees F was 2 per year in 1950, and in 2019, 7 nights per year. The number of days with a heat index above 105 degrees F have also increased, and more heat waves are expected in the future.

The elderly generally are more vulnerable to the effects of extreme heat, especially if they are taking certain medications or have conditions that can reduce their heat tolerance. Also, some medical conditions can increase the risk of heatstroke or other heat-related illnesses, such as cardiovascular disease, asthma, emphysema, kidney disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes. Babies are more vulnerable as well because their metabolism is different from adults, making them particularly sensitive to heat. Air-conditioning is one of the most effective ways to protect babies and the elderly from heat-related illnesses.

The Climate Justice Wing supports climate change policies that benefit overburdened and vulnerable communities. HB303 will help mitigate some of the impacts of hotter days and nights on Maryland's most vulnerable residents. We urge a **FAVORABLE** report for HB303.