



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter
In Favor of SB757
- Baltimore City – Air Conditioning in Residential Rental Units –**

**Before the Judicial Proceedings Committee
On March 7, 2023**

Chair Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee:

- **SB757 requires landlords of residential units in Baltimore City to provide air conditioning between June 1 and September 30 if at least one (1) resident in the unit is age three (3) or younger or sixty-five (65) or older.**
- **Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties have similar, but more far-reaching laws. Their laws require air conditioning for all renters. This bill is limited to a smaller group of individuals; residents three (3) or younger or sixty-five (65) or older.**
- **In the past 5 years there have been 36 deaths and 5,400 emergency medical calls in Baltimore City due to heat-related illness (800 calls last year).**

- **In 2021, Baltimore City experienced above normal temperatures with 19 Code Red Extreme Heat days and 3 heat-related deaths.**
- **In summer months, urban air temperatures can be up to ten (10) degrees higher than the air of surrounding suburban or rural areas — a phenomenon known as the urban heat island (UHI) effect.**
- **Extreme heat events are getting worse with climate change. The urban heat island effect is anticipated to intensify as extreme heat events increase with climate change. Heat events will increase in severity and intensity, leading to a rise in daily temperatures.**
- **Estimates are that in 50 years, Baltimore weather will be similar to what Mississippi is experiencing today**
- **Approximately fifty-one percent (51%) of Baltimore’s households are renters, many of whom are young children and elderly. For these two (2) groups, air conditioning is essential.**
 - **In Baltimore City, 20% of children (about 24,000) have an asthma diagnosis, which is more than double the national prevalence of 9%.**
 - **Pediatric asthma-related emergency department visits occur in Baltimore at more than double the statewide rate.**
 - **According to the Maryland Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC), in 2019, children in Baltimore City were hospitalized 389 times with asthma as the primary reason for admission. Children in Baltimore went to the emergency 3,457 times with asthma as the primary reason for the visit.**

- **Air condition systems filter out airborne allergens. Examples include dust mites, animal dander, pollen, and mold spores. They also work great for filtering non-allergic asthma triggers, such as smoke from wood fires, smoke from cigarettes, and various forms of air pollutants.**
 - **Air conditioning also reduces humidity in the home, which can trigger an asthma attack, and lower humidity reduces mold, pollen, dust mites from growing rapidly because they thrive in hot and humid conditions.**
 - **Extreme heat also poses the potential for increased mortality from cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness, and stroke, which heavily impacts the elderly**
- **The extreme summer heat also disproportionately impacts Black households, women-led households, and lower-income households. They make up the majority renters in Baltimore City.**

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 757.

Sincerely,



Jill P. Carter, Esq.