



Bill No: SB 522— Charter Counties - Enforcement of Local Laws

Committee: Education, Energy, and Environment

Date: February 8, 2024

Position: Unfavorable

The Apartment and Office Building Association of Metropolitan Washington (AOBA) represents members who own or manage more than 23 million square feet of commercial office space and 133,000 apartment rental units in Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties.

Senate Bill 522 would increase the maximum amount of a civil or criminal fine that may be imposed by a county to enforce local laws enacted by the local ordinances from \$1,000 to \$5,000.

AOBA is concerned with increasing the penalty for civil fees without justification. AOBA members are responsible housing providers who follow county ordinances and ensure compliance to avoid penalties or losing rental licenses. Increasing the fee to \$5,000 is excessive and may penalize housing providers operating in good faith to comply and, for certain circumstances, out of their realm of influence. For example, the enforcement agency cannot enforce specific local ordinances due to a shortage in staffing, or a resident causes a housing violation in their unit without proper notification from the housing provider to remediate.

For these reasons, AOBA requests an unfavorable report on SB 522. For further information, contact Ryan Washington, AOBA’s Government Affairs Manager, at 202-770-7713 or email rwashington@aoba-metro.org.