



**State of Maryland**  
**Department of State Police**  
Government Affairs Unit  
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## **POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

**DATE:** February 11, 2025

**BILL NUMBER:** House Bill 489

**POSITION:** Letter of Information

**BILL TITLE:** Maryland Department of Labor-Study on Building Code Requirements for Single-Staircase Buildings

### **REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

This legislation requires the Maryland Department of Labor to conduct a study on building code requirements for single-staircase buildings in the state and other states. The Department of Labor shall consult with a fire engineer from a public institution of higher education and a representative of a union that represents firefighters.

The matter of single-exit residential buildings has been addressed by action of the International Code Council at the Council's second round of public hearings for the 2027 edition of the International Building Code. The revised wording to that code would permit buildings up to and including four stories in height to be constructed with a single exit stair with certain other protective features. That arrangement was agreed upon by all interested parties, including the original proponent for the six-story design, except for the IAFF which was opposed to any building more than three stories in height to be served by a single exit.

Since NFPA 101, as currently referenced by the State Fire Prevention Code, already permits a residential building of four or fewer stories to be served by a single exit, these latest actions by the International Code Council would correlate the requirements of the building code with those already stated in the fire code. The only action needed in Maryland to correlate these requirements would be to amend the 2021 edition of the International Building Code as currently referenced by the Maryland Building Performance Standards to recognize the revisions to the building code authorizing a four-story building to be served by a single exit.

Any study regarding changing the fire code or Maryland Building Performance Standards should include a consultation with the Office of the State Fire Marshal. as such, the Department of State Police recommends the following amendment; Insert on page 2 in line 24, (3) The State Fire Marshal or their Designee.

Adding this amendment to the bill would allow the Office of the State Fire Marshal to provide their collective expertise in both state and national building performance standards as it relates to any recommendations required by House Bill 489.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Department of State Police look forward to working with the committee on amendments should they wish to move forward with House Bill 489.