



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 1257: Landlord and Tenant – Residential Leases – Fee Disclosures

House Environment and Transportation Committee

Friday, February 28, 2025 - 1:00 PM

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

The National Consumer Law Center has recognized that undisclosed apartment application fees contribute to an annual financial burden of \$276 million for renters. Addressing the critical need for clear, upfront disclosure of all mandatory fees is essential in order to ensure tenants can make well-informed housing choices and won't be taken advantage of.

House Bill 1257 requires landlords offering five or more dwelling units to disclose all mandatory fees associated with a rental unit that might have been previously hidden. This includes providing an itemized list specifying each fee's amount, purpose, and payment schedule. The bill also prohibits landlords from charging undisclosed fees.

Similar legislation has proven effective in other states. For example, Minnesota passed a rental transparency law in 2023 requiring landlords to provide detailed notices of all fees to tenants, ensuring renters are fully informed about any additional costs beyond base rent.

This legislation protects tenants from unexpected financial burdens and promotes transparency in the market. By standardizing fee disclosures, the bill ensures Maryland's rental market remains fair and accessible. The flexible framework allowing local jurisdictions to adopt more stringent rules further strengthens tenant protections.

An amendment has been presented to the Committee in coordination with the Department of Housing and Community Development. This amendment strengthens enforcement mechanisms while maintaining a lower fiscal impact, ensuring greater accountability and tenant protections.

I urge the committee to give a favorable report on HB 1257.