



**Bill Title:** Senate Bill 856, Mold - Landlord Requirements and Regulations (Maryland Tenant Mold Protection Act)

**Committee:** Judicial Proceedings Committee

**Date:** February 25, 2025

**Position:** Favorable with Amendments

The Maryland Multi-Housing Association (MMHA) respectfully submits this testimony on Senate Bill 856. MMHA is a professional trade association established in 1996, representing owners and managers of over 210,000 rental housing units in 958 apartment communities across Maryland. Our members house more than 538,000 residents, and MMHA also includes over 250 associate members who provide goods and services to the multi-housing industry.

Senate Bill 856 proposes several measures related to mold prevention and remediation. It requires multiple state agencies—including the Department of the Environment, the Maryland Department of Health, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Maryland Department of Labor, and the Department of General Services—to develop a centralized website providing information about mold remediation and dampness. Additionally, the bill mandates the creation and periodic update of an informational pamphlet on mold, which must include state resources and tenant guidance on mold prevention. Instead of developing a new pamphlet, agencies may opt to use the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s “Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture and Your Home.”

Housing providers would be required to provide this pamphlet at lease signing and every two years thereafter, with residents signing an acknowledgment of receipt. Furthermore, Senate Bill 856 mandates that housing providers conduct a mold assessment and mold remediation within 45 days of receiving written notice of suspected mold from a local enforcement agency or a tenant.

MMHA supports the intent of the bill, particularly its focus on resident education regarding mold prevention. The Mold Workgroup Report (2024) recognized the importance of resident awareness, recommending the development of a centralized website and distribution of an educational pamphlet to tenants, in alignment with the bill’s objectives. However, MMHA has concerns about specific provisions that could impose unnecessary administrative burdens or compliance challenges.

Suggested Amendments:

1. Requiring Pamphlet Distribution Every Two Years

MMHA agrees that providing residents with the mold information pamphlet at lease signing is reasonable. However, requiring landlords to redistribute the pamphlet every two years—along with obtaining a signed acknowledgment—creates unnecessary



administrative burdens. The Mold Workgroup Report supports providing educational materials to tenants but does not suggest repeated distribution requirements beyond the initial lease signing. We recommend removing the biennial requirement by striking page 4, line 15 from the bill.

2. Automatic Mold Remediation Without Confirmation of Mold Growth

While the requirement for a mold assessment within 45 days of receiving a complaint is reasonable, the bill automatically triggers remediation, even if the assessment finds no evidence of mold. The Mold Workgroup Report emphasizes that mold abatement efforts should focus on both mold and the underlying moisture issue, but it does not advocate for mandatory remediation without confirmation. We recommend amending the bill to remove the automatic remediation requirement by striking page 4, lines 24-25 ("AND MOLD REMEDIATION").

MMHA appreciates the bill's effort to improve resident education and establish best practices for mold prevention. However, we urge amendments to ensure the legislation is practical and aligned with the recommendations of the Mold Workgroup Report.

MMHA respectfully requests a favorable report with amendments to Senate Bill 856.

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