

SB#0856_Richard Kaplowitz_FAV

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TESTIMONY ON SB#0856 -
FAVORABLE

Mold - Landlord Requirements and Regulations (Maryland Tenant Mold Protection Act)

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0856, Mold - Landlord Requirements and Regulations (Maryland Tenant Mold Protection Act)

This is a bill to protect public health for tenants where exposure to mold might be present.

Exposure to damp and moldy environments may cause a variety of health effects, or none.

For some people, mold can cause a stuffy nose, sore throat, coughing or wheezing, burning eyes, or skin rash. People with [asthma](#) or who are allergic to mold may have severe reactions. Immune-compromised people and people with chronic lung disease may get infections in their lungs from mold. For people who are sensitive to molds exposure to mold can lead to symptoms such as stuffy noses, wheezing, and red or itchy eyes, or skin. Severe reactions, such as fever or shortness of breath, may occur among workers exposed to large amounts of mold in occupational settings, such as farmers working around moldy hay. ¹

My Jewish faith tells me that mold was known in Biblical times and actions had to be taken against it to stop it from spreading.

Besides physical health, scriptures discuss mold in the house as a representation of sin. Like leprosy, mold in a house is unclean and destructive. According to the Old Testament Law, mold has a debilitating impact on a person's home. Like transgression, it would spread and if left unchecked it would cause chaos.

Mold has been present in homes since biblical times. In Leviticus 14:33-45, the Lord told Moses and Aaron how to rid a house of mold. The inspection, scraping, and cleaning are what humans follow to date, except we do not involve a priest! ²

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/mold-health/about/index.html#:~:text=Immune%2Dcompromised%20people%20and%20people,or%20itchy%20eyes%2C%20or%20skin.>

² <https://www.aricgitomerarchitect.com/mold-a-disease-in-your-house-an-architectural-bible-story/#:~:text=Besides%20physical%20health%2C%20scriptures%20discuss.house%20is%20unclean%20and%20destructive.>

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These measures are designed to protect tenants' health by ensuring prompt and effective mold remediation, which is particularly important for vulnerable populations like children.

To mitigate the possibility of tenants' exposure to mold this bill will require 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 certain pamphlet and website containing information on what mold is and its effects on health. It should also include information on remediation when mold is found or encountered. It will mandate a landlord to provide a tenant with certain information at certain times and in a certain manner about mold. To be proactive on prevention and remediation of a mold problem this bill will require a landlord to perform a mold assessment and mold remediation within 45 days after receipt of a written notice regarding the detection of mold.

It is incumbent upon landlords to prevent and fix possible harm to tenants, much as Moses and Aaron were instructed to do so in the Bible.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#0856.