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February 17, 2025

Luke H. Clippinger, Esq.
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
Taylor House Office Building, Room 101
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 113

Dear Chairman Clippinger:

I plan to testify in person in support of HB 113 on February 19 at 1:00 PM.


Attached please find my written testimony submission which includes photos of my client's horrible injuries.

I will also email all members of the Committee videos of the explosion and of my client immediately thereafter.

I urge the Committee to issue a favorable report for HB 113.

Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,


Andrew E. Bederman

Andrew E. Bederman (MD, DC) | Jason W. Fernandez (MD, DC, VA)
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On March 4, 2022, a poorly trained maintenance worker was performing plumbing repairs in the basement of the Friendly Garden Apartments in the 2400 block of Lyttonsville Road in Silver Spring. The worker negligently severed a gas line, which caused the basement to fill with dangerous, explosive gas. Later that morning, the gas ignited and exploded.

At the time of the explosion, Jane Doe, a 60-year-old grandmother, was sitting in her daughter's apartment at Friendly Gardens, waiting for her daughter and grandchildren to return. When the gas ignited, the apartment building was destroyed, with Doe still inside her daughter's apartment.

Concussed but fortunate to survive, Doe was taken by ambulance to the Burn Unit at Washington Hospital Center. When she woke up, she learned that she had suffered second and third-degree burns to most of her body, including her scalp, face, eyelids, wrists, hands, neck, arms, shoulders, and legs. She had to breathe through a tube because the searing heat from the explosion had burned her airway, making it hard to breathe on her own.

Over the next several months, Doe endured more than a dozen surgeries, including skin grafts to her arms, legs, shoulders and face. Her eyes and eyelids were so damaged by the fire that her eyesight was impaired and she could not close her eyes to sleep. She had muscle contractures in her hands, limiting her strength and range of motion. On April 15, 2022, a finger on her left hand was amputated because it could not be saved.

Doe was discharged from the hospital on May 26, 2022, but her nightmarish ordeal did not end then. She spent many, many months in and at the hospital for multiple scar revision procedures, occupational and physical therapy sessions, and treatments for ocular, pulmonary, and cardiovascular injuries that she suffered due to the gas explosion.

Doe has incurred more than \$3 million in medical expenses to date, and her future medical, surgical, rehabilitation, and life care needs are estimated to be approximately \$10 million.

Doe's life was changed irrevocably on March 4, 2022. Although the Friendly Garden Apartments have ample insurance coverage, Maryland law arbitrarily and unfairly limits to \$935,000.00 what Doe can recover as compensation for her persistent pain, anguish, disfigurement, and loss of enjoyment of the life she once had – the life that she would still be living, but for the unreasonably unsafe conduct of a poorly-trained maintenance worker.

If the incident had happened just 2.0 miles away, in Washington DC, the law would not limit Doe's compensation unfairly. Maryland law should not limit fair and just compensation for injured Marylanders.

I invited my client to attend the Hearing today but she understandably declined. She is too embarrassed by, and self-conscious about, her horrible disfigurement which is shown in the attached photographs.

I urge this Committee to issue a favorable report for House Bill 113.





