

March 3, 2026

Chair Valderrama, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

I am writing as a Maryland resident in strong support of **HB 1221 – Public Safety – Short-Term Rental Units – Fire Safety** (Jillian and Lindsay Wiener Short-Term Rental Fire Safety Act), and I respectfully urge you to issue a favorable report.

At its core, HB 1221 is about protecting lives. As short-term rentals continue to grow in popularity across Maryland, so too does our responsibility to ensure that families, visitors, and residents are protected by clear and consistent fire safety standards. Guests who stay in short-term rental properties often assume the same baseline safety protections they would expect in hotels or other regulated lodging establishments. Unfortunately, that is not always the case.

This legislation provides common-sense, reasonable fire safety requirements designed to reduce risk and prevent tragedy. Measures such as properly installed and maintained smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers, and clearly marked egress routes are not burdensome — they are basic safeguards. These are practical, cost-effective steps that can mean the difference between life and death in an emergency.

The naming of this bill serves as a solemn reminder that gaps in safety standards can have devastating consequences. We cannot undo the past, but we can honor those affected by ensuring stronger protections for the future. Maryland has an opportunity to lead with thoughtful, balanced policy that prioritizes public safety while allowing the short-term rental market to continue operating responsibly.

As a citizen, I believe public safety should never be optional. HB 1221 strikes the right balance between accountability and practicality, and it reinforces Maryland's commitment to safeguarding residents and visitors alike.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on HB 1221.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our state.

Sincerely,

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