



2512 Chelmsford Drive, Crofton, Maryland 21114
Phone: 301-241-8069 Fax: 301-851-0920 megan@venuscounseling.com

Public Safety Committee/ Delegate Foley

March 3, 2026

HB1221

Position: SUPPORT

Written Testimony in Favor of House Bill 1221

Dear Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 1221, the "Jillian and Lindsay Wiener Short-Term Rental Fire Safety Act." This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring the safety and well-being of individuals who utilize short-term rental units across Maryland. By implementing clear and enforceable fire safety requirements, this bill addresses a pressing need to protect lives and property in our communities.

The provisions outlined in HB 1221 are both practical and necessary. Requiring short-term rental hosts to post evacuation diagrams, emergency contact numbers, provide fire extinguishers, and install interconnected smoke alarms ensures that guests are equipped with essential tools and information to respond effectively in the event of an emergency. These measures are not only common-sense safety precautions but also align with existing fire codes, reinforcing the importance of compliance and accountability.

Furthermore, the bill's requirement for annual inspections of short-term rental units by counties and Baltimore City is a proactive approach to maintaining safety standards. By mandating regular inspections and reporting compliance data to the State Fire Marshal, this legislation establishes a framework for transparency and accountability. The option for counties and Baltimore City to delegate inspections to qualified third-party inspectors ensures that the process is both efficient and thorough.

The tragic loss of Jillian and Lindsay Wiener underscores the urgency of this legislation. It is our responsibility to honor their memory by taking meaningful action to prevent similar tragedies in the future. HB 1221 provides a comprehensive and balanced approach to fire safety in short-term rental units, protecting both guests and hosts while fostering a culture of safety and responsibility.

I urge the members of this committee to support House Bill 1221 and ensure its swift passage.

By doing so, we can make Maryland a safer place for all residents and visitors.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Megan M. Kniffen
2512 Chelmsford Drive
Crofton, Maryland 21114
Social Worker and Friend of Jillian and Lindsay's family