



Senate Bill 12

Committee: Economic Matters

Bill: Senate Bill 12 Residential Rental Apartments - Air-Conditioning Requirement

Date: 4/12/26

Position: Informational

The Maryland Multi-Housing Association (MMHA) is a professional trade association established in 1996, whose members house more than 538,000 residents of the State of Maryland. MMHA's membership consists of owners and managers of more than 210,000 rental housing homes in over 958 apartment communities and more than 250 associate member companies who supply goods and services to the multi-housing industry.

Senate Bill 12 ("SB 12") requires a landlord to provide air-conditioning to residential rental units in apartment buildings with four or more individual dwelling units in a certain manner beginning June 1, 2026, for newly constructed residential rental units and beginning October 1, 2026, for residential rental units that undergo renovation that includes the replacement or substantial upgrade of electrical systems or heating systems.

In response to the air-conditioning related legislation that has been introduced at the state and local levels, MMHA conducted an internal survey with association membership in the Interim to gain a better understanding of the current practice of providing air-conditioning to residents. **Out of MMHA members that represented over 128,000 units statewide (About 60% of units in our membership), only 600 units had no central air-conditioning and did not offer window air-conditioning units to residents upon request (0.47% of units from the sample).**

SB 12 mirrors closely the legislative language of House Bill 339 at the close of the 2025 Maryland Legislative Session. It was determined that with the prospective nature of the legislation and the flexibility built into it, thanks in part to the good faith efforts made with the house sponsor on various amendments, MMHA would no longer oppose the legislation at the end of the 2025 Legislative Session. For those reasons mentioned above, as well as the results of our internal membership survey during the Interim, MMHA will not oppose SB 12.

If SB 12 were to pass, MMHA would ask that the Judicial Proceedings Committee amendments remain on the legislation. Specifically, the preemptive language on 8-122(D) would be beneficial for housing providers who operate in multiple jurisdictions and are seeking to comply with the legislation in good-faith. Competing local laws on these provisions may become unwieldy and troublesome for housing providers to navigate.

Additionally, if SB 12 were to pass, MMHA would ask the Administration for reasonableness and deference to housing providers with the interpretation of the law. Specifically, the threshold for what should be considered a "...SUBSTANTIAL UPGRADE OF ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS OR HEATING SYSTEMS" as described in 8-122(B)(2) should be a significant standard to attain. It is worth noting that for those housing providers that will make additional renovations as a result of the passage of this legislation, rents will increase on tenants at a time when the State has a dearth of affordable housing.

Please contact Matthew Pipkin, Jr. at (443) 995-4342 or mpipkin@mmhaonline.org with any questions.