



BRANDON M. SCOTT
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations
88 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

HB 433

February 11, 2026

TO: Members of the House Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

RE: House Bill 433 – Business Regulation – Collection Agencies – Licensure Exemption for Property Managers

POSITION: Oppose

Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **opposes** House Bill (HB) 433 – Collection Agencies – Licensure Exemption for Property Managers.

HB 433 creates a special exemption for property managers from Maryland's debt collector licensing requirements. Maryland's debt collector licensing requirements are an important consumer protection tool that allows enforcement agencies to hold bad actors accountable. For example, collecting debt without a required license is a violation of Baltimore's consumer protection ordinance. Exempting property managers from debt collector licensing will embolden bad actors to engage in more deceptive, abusive, and harassing debt collection tactics.

Like any other debt collectors, property managers are financially motivated to collect as much rent as possible for the owner, leading bad actors to use aggressive, deceptive tactics. Many renters are vulnerable to illegal debt collection activity because they lack the resources and time to vindicate their rights. Oftentimes property managers wield enormous power over tenants, because they can threaten eviction. Baltimore seeks to hold predatory property managers accountable. This bill would make that more difficult.

There is no separate licensing regime for property managers – only the current debt collector licensing requirement. Unlike barbers, contractors, lawyers, and virtually any other profession, there is no licensing regime for property managers. Baltimore has a residential rental property licensing program, but this is geared to ensuring that a rental property is habitable, has a valid lead certificate, and provides a contact person to the locality. There is no relief under Baltimore's rental property licensing laws for tenants who have experienced deceptive, harassing, or predatory practices at the hands of a property manager.

It is important to note that small landlords are already effectively exempt. If you own a property and manage the property yourself, you do NOT need to become licensed as a debt collector. Only persons who collect on a debt owed to a different person must become licensed. If you own a property and contract out debt collection to a professional, the professional should become licensed as a debt collector.

For these reasons, BCA respectfully requests an **unfavorable** report on HB 433.

*Annapolis – phone: 410.269.0207 • fax: 410.269.6785
Baltimore – phone: 410.396.3497 • fax: 410.396.5136
<https://mogr.baltimorecity.gov/>*