

The time to pass MD HB1221 — the Jillian and Lindsay Wiener Short-Term Rental Fire Safety Act — is now.

More than three years ago, two vibrant, beloved lives were lost in a preventable tragedy. The short-term rental they trusted had advertised functioning smoke detectors on VRBO, yet those life-saving devices were not operational. What should have been a safe family stay became an unimaginable loss. This was not an unavoidable accident. It was a failure of accountability.

The August 2022 tragedy that took Jillian and Lindsay's lives has deeply affected countless communities. The Wiener family are dear friends — we traveled together, celebrated holidays together, and watched our children grow side by side. Their absence is felt every single day. No family should endure such preventable heartbreak

Today, families across Maryland continue to book homes through platforms like Airbnb and VRBO with no reliable way to verify whether basic fire safety measures are actually in place. Renters are asked to trust unchecked claims while rental platforms profit from the listings. That is unacceptable. When families walk into a short-term rental, they should have the same expectation of safety and oversight that they would in a hotel.

This bill will not bring Jillian and Lindsay back. But it will protect other families. It will close a dangerous gap by requiring short-term rentals to have working smoke detectors and an annual fire safety inspection and have documentation of these important safety features uploaded to the short-term rental portals.

Please move MD HB1221 into law — not only in their honor, but in the name of every family who deserves to feel safe when they close the door at night.

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