

HB1218\_RichardKaplowitz\_FAV

03/05/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz Frederick,  
MD 21703

**TESTIMONY ON HB#1218- POSITION: FAVORABLE**

**Department of Housing and Community Development - Severe Health and Safety Risk Properties  
- Intervention Plan**

**TO:** Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian and members of the Economic Matters Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#1218, **Department of Housing and Community Development - Severe Health and Safety Risk Properties - Intervention Plan**

Under existing Maryland law tenants are protected from severe health and safety risks—such as lack of heat, water, electricity, structural hazards, or severe infestations—through the legally implied [Warranty of Habitability](#), which requires landlords to keep properties fit for human habitation. If issues are not addressed promptly after written notice, tenants can take legal actions, including reporting to housing inspectors, filing for [rent escrow](#) (paying rent to the court), or [terminating the lease](#).<sup>1</sup>

However, Maryland needs to find and remediate severe health and safety risk properties in the State and give authorities the ability to take actions to fix identified problems.

The bill will require the Department of Housing and Community Development, Office of Landlord and Tenant Affairs in consultation with the Attorney General to develop a plan to identify severe health and safety risk properties in the State and take related actions; and requiring the Department to submit the plan and certain recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before August 31, 2027.

The plan and the recommendations made can guide future actions by the Governor and the General Assembly to increase tenant safety and health.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#1218.**

---

<sup>1</sup> Google AI Search “protecting tenants from Severe Health and Safety Risk Properties”