

To: Economic Matters Committee Members

From: Susan L. Cook

Date: March 3, 2026

Subject: Support for HB1221 - Jillian and Lindsay Wiener Short-term Rental Fire Safety Act-
FAVORABLE

Dear Committee Members:

My name is Susan Cook and I am a resident of Montgomery County, Maryland. I am writing to strongly urge your support for HB1221 -Jillian and Lindsay Wiener Short-term Rental Fire Safety Act, which would establish statewide fire safety requirements for short-term rental units.

This legislation is vital to our community because many families, including ours and the Wieners, depend on safe short-term rentals. Imagine that you and your family rented a vacation home to enjoy some family time together. On the first night, you awaken to sounds of glass shattering and a raging fire engulfing the home. You and your family members try to flee, but not all family members survive the smoke and burning flames. In the end, you discover that this fire was PREVENTABLE, if only the owners of the rental property had installed working smoke detectors and provided other fire safety precautions. PREVENTABLE, if only the booking agent had required the owners to provide these minimal safety measures. PREVENTABLE, if only the State mandated inspections of short-term rental properties. This is the scenario that the Wiener family faced in August of 2022, but it could've happened to any one of us who rely on the safety of the homes we rent on a short-term basis.

Passing this bill will not place an onerous burden on the host, booking agent or even the state. Any cost incurred will surely outweigh the countless lives saved by installing basic fire safety standards and ensuring compliance with these standards. Again, this avoidable tragedy could happen to numerous families in the state who innocently book short-term rental properties thinking that all precautions to prevent a horrific ending to treasured family vacations were taken. I urge you to vote in favor of HB1221 -Jillian and Lindsay Wiener Short-term Rental Fire Safety Act and take a necessary step toward protecting the health and safety of our community members.

Thank you for your time to consider my input on this urgent matter.

Susan L. Cook