

March 12, 2026

The Honorable Kriselda Valderrama
Chair, House Economic Matters Committee
230 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Letter of Opposition HB 1497 Charles County - Rent Stabilization - Seniors

Dear Chair Valderrama,

Chair and Members of the Committee,

The Maryland Building Industry Association (MBIA) submits this testimony in opposition to the proposal requiring Charles County to establish a rent increase limit for housing units occupied by seniors that is no greater than the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

While we strongly support policies that help seniors remain in safe and stable housing, this legislation would impose a form of rent control that could unintentionally reduce the availability and quality of housing for older residents in the long term.

Limiting rent increases to the CPI fails to account for the full range of operating costs associated with providing and maintaining housing. Property owners face rising expenses for insurance, property taxes, utilities, maintenance, and capital improvements, many of which have increased at rates exceeding inflation in recent years. A rigid cap tied solely to CPI would make it increasingly difficult for housing providers to cover these costs and reinvest in their properties.

In addition, rent control policies often discourage new housing development and investment in existing housing stock. Developers and lenders rely on predictable financial returns to finance housing projects. Restrictions on rental revenue can make senior housing developments less feasible, ultimately limiting the supply of housing options available to seniors in Charles County.

The bill also raises administrative and compliance concerns by applying rent restrictions based on the age of occupants. Property owners may face challenges verifying eligibility, tracking tenant status changes, and ensuring ongoing compliance with the proposed requirements.

Rather than implementing rent control, policymakers should focus on solutions that expand housing supply, encourage the development of senior housing, and provide targeted assistance to seniors with fixed incomes who may be struggling with rising housing costs.

We urge the committee to give this legislation an unfavorable report. For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: Members of the House ECM Committee