

In support of House Bill 1221:

HB1221

Not all jurisdictions in Maryland require uniform fire and safety protections for short-term rentals — and that failure demands immediate legislative action.

I am writing to express my support for the passage of MD SB624, the Jillian and Lindsay Wiener Short Term Rental Fire Safety Act.

It is unacceptable that property owners can make unsupported claims about the presence or condition of fire safety equipment and have those representations advertised on platforms such as Airbnb and VRBO without meaningful accountability.

As a result of these failures my family, my brother's family, the Wiener family endured an unspeakable tragedy. They lost their two beautiful girls, my precious nieces Jillian and Lindsay. 19 and 21 years old, plucked from this world in the prime of their lives. The loss of Jillian and Lindsay is felt every single day; it is a wound that will never heal.

What happened to them was incomprehensible, devastating, and should never have occurred. No family should ever suffer such unimaginable grief because fundamental fire safety standards were absent, ignored, or left unverified.

Jillian and Lindsay's deaths were entirely preventable, and that truth demands immediate action.

Passing MD SB624 would require yearly property inspections for owners who offer short-term rentals. Owners would be mandated to provide proof of inspection and those inspection reports would be accessible on rental platforms. Prospective renters would be able to independently verify that a property has passed fire and safety requirements.

When lives can be saved by enforcing basic safety standards, the responsibility to act is nonnegotiable. It is a critical step toward ensuring that no other family endures a loss that could and should have been prevented.

Respectfully Submitted,

Miriam H. Bernstein