

Dear Senator Feldman,

I am writing in support of HB1221, and SB0626, "Public Safety – Short–Term Rental Units – Fire Safety (Jillian and Lindsay Wiener Short–Term Rental Fire Safety Act)" that is scheduled to be heard in the house on 3/05 at 1:00 p.m.

I was in the back of an Uber the day my phone lit up with a Group Me notification from my college sorority's group chat. The content that notification held would change the trajectory of my life and thousands of others. My best friend, at the age of 19, had lost her life alongside her sister. There was no rhyme, no reason, no God could've existed, I convinced myself, if something like this was capable of being two sisters' fates, and now, a whole family's story. The next few weeks were a blur. I couldn't tell you what went down between those days, and between my ears. I flew to Maryland, where I got to visit my best friend's beloved hometown. Being from dry California, I was in awe of the lushness and expansive greenery flourishing throughout Potomac. I saw Lindsay in every street, tree, shop, SoulCycle studio, and home. Especially her home. Her perfect childhood home seemed just as warm and alive as she will always be. The walls hugged its inhabitants in a way only Lindsay's house could. Each crevice was piled with so much life, it was hard to believe that the reason we all gathered there that day was death.

When you're young, you find yourself with your whole life ahead of you to plan. So that's what we did. We planned stupid things like crushes for that year and spring break sophomore year, and we planned important things like where we would live when we were old and grey, and how we would get your husbands to be best friends so that our kids could in turn, be best friends. We filled our futures, near and far, with so many dreams and wishes. I knew we would never be able to fulfill them all, but I never expected we wouldn't even get close. After telling a tragedy such as the Wiener family's time and time again, the sheer shock gets softer with every blow. Over time and as Lindsay misses more and more of the plans we made, it fades less and less from a nightmare, and settles into reality. My body, like clockwork, senses the two worst days of the year. August 3rd, the anniversary of her passing, and January 2nd, her birthday. Every day stings, but those two cut through my body, heart, and the wall of comfort I've tried to build up to shield myself from the pain. But while the shock of the story may settle over time, Lindsay's absence will never lessen, and the holes she and her sister left behind will never shrink.

The absence of proper fire safety in rentals took two of the best people the world had to offer, and if passing this bill can save just one person from experiencing their own August 3rd, it is absolutely imperative that it be passed for every future mother, friend, father, brother, sister, and loved one.

Best,
Ella Carey