



BRANDON M. SCOTT  
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations  
88 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

**SB0012/HB0153**

April 2, 2026

**TO:** Members of the Economic Matters Committee  
**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Director, Mayor's Office of Government Relations  
**RE:** Senate Bill 12 – Residential Rental Apartments - Air-Conditioning Requirement

**POSITION: Support with Amendment**

Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** Senate Bill 12 **with an amendment**.

This bill would require landlords to provide air-conditioning to residential buildings with 10 or more units during the months of June through September, excluding buildings located on property listed on the national register of historic places. The bill only applies to newly built buildings and buildings that undergo substantial upgrades of electrical or heating systems. While the House version of this bill has been amended to specify that this section does not preclude local jurisdictions from enacting and enforcing air-conditioning requirements for residential rental units that are more stringent than the requirements in the bill, **the Senate version of the bill has been amended such that it explicitly preempts local ordinances that impose air conditioning requirements. Baltimore City is very concerned about this amendment and respectfully urges the Committee to amend the bill to conform with the House version.**

Per the bill, landlords would need to keep the temperature in their buildings at 80 degrees or below during the summer. This temperature is too high for infants, children, pregnant people, and seniors. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, a room that is too hot can increase the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). If the Senate version of this bill were to pass, the City and counties would be prevented from enacting local air-conditioning laws with the safety of their most vulnerable residents in mind.

2025 had record-setting high temperatures in Baltimore City, with the heat index reaching 114 degrees Fahrenheit at one point in June. Between 2018 and 2025, the Maryland Department of Health reported that there were 43 heat-related deaths in Baltimore City. This number is expected to grow as climate change progresses and temperatures become more extreme. National data show that people without air conditioning are among those most at risk.<sup>i</sup> Especially vulnerable populations include infants, young children, and individuals who are pregnant, among others.<sup>ii</sup> Infants and young children are particularly vulnerable to extreme heat because their smaller bodies heat up more quickly, they have less capacity to release heat via sweating, and they rely on other for cooling.<sup>iii</sup> For pregnant people, the stress from extreme heat can lead to increased gestational diabetes, high blood pressure in pregnancy, and premature rupture of membranes.<sup>iv</sup> High temperatures are also associated with increased rates of stillbirth, preterm birth, and low birth weight babies. In turn, preterm birth and low birth weight are both linked to cardiovascular disease and diabetes in adulthood.<sup>v</sup> These outcomes are preventable – if we take measures to prevent them.

The House version of this bill will provide an important starting point for protecting our vulnerable constituents. For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable with amendment** report on SB 12.

---

<sup>i</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024). People at Increased Risk for Heat-Related Illness. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/extreme-heat/risk-factors/index.html>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/heat-health/risk-factors/heat-and-pregnancy.html>

<sup>iii</sup> Ebi KL, Capon A, Berry P, et al. Hot weather and heat extremes: health risks. *Lancet*. Aug 21 2021;398(10301):698-708.

doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(21)01208-3 5. Tsuzuki-Hayakawa K, Tochiara Y, Ohnaka T. Thermoregulation during heat exposure of young children compared to their mothers. *Eur J Appl Physiol Occup Physiol*. 1995;72(1-2):12-7. doi:10.1007/BF0096410

<sup>iv</sup> Ebi KL, Capon A, Berry P, et al. Hot weather and heat extremes: health risks. *Lancet*. Aug 21 2021;398(10301):698-708. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(21)01208-3 5.