



Chair Kris Valderrama
and Members, Economic Matters Committee
House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

February 19, 2026

House Bill 149 – Fire Prevention – Favorable

Dear Chair Valderrama and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

My name is Dan Reed and I serve as the Maryland Policy Director for Greater Greater Washington, a nonprofit that supports better housing, land use, and transportation policies throughout Greater Washington and beyond. **GGWash strongly supports House Bill 149.**

As written, this bill would require the owners of high-rise apartment buildings undergoing renovation to install fire safety systems such as sprinklers, fire-resistant doors, and smokeproof exit enclosures. It is a response to the findings of the Workgroup to Develop Fire Safety Best Practices for Pre-1974 High Rise Apartment Buildings, formed in the aftermath of a [catastrophic fire](#) on February 23, 2023 at the Arrive Silver Spring apartments. Hundreds of people were displaced, and a young woman named Melanie Diaz lost her life.

This matter is personal to me. Fires were a common occurrence in that complex when I was growing up there in the 1990s. Some of my most formative memories are of being trapped in our 14th floor apartment during fires; strangers helping my mother carry me down the stairs while evacuating; and waiting in the cold night for the firefighters to say it was safe to return.

Thousands of people across Maryland live in buildings like Arrive, which was built in 1967 and predates modern fire regulations. Not surprisingly, voters support making them safer. In January, we commissioned a [poll that found 87% of Marylanders support this bill](#). We hope you'll stand with the tenants of these buildings who deserve safer housing, and ask for a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dan Reed'.

Dan Reed
Maryland Policy Director

The Washington, DC region is great  and it can be greater.