



TESTIMONY FOR SB0941
Department of Housing and Community Development - Severe Health and Safety Risk Properties - Intervention Plan

Bill Sponsor: Senator Henson

Committee: Judiciary

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0941 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Sadly, there are too many properties in the state where the landlord does not care about keeping the building in good repair, leaving the tenants to live in squalor. This causes serious risks for the tenants – both health and safety risks.

This bill, if enacted, would require the Department of Housing and Community Development to create a process for identifying severe health and safety properties in the state and predatory landlord practices. They are tasked with working with the Attorney General to develop methods for the residents of the properties to refer issues to them. Finally, they are to develop a series of consequences (financial and legal) as well as a timeline for ensuring that repairs and other fixes are made appropriately.

This is an area of housing that needs a lot more oversight and more penalties for the landlords who do this. We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.