

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2022 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 918

(Montgomery County Delegation)

Environment and Transportation and
Economic Matters

Judicial Proceedings and Finance

**Montgomery County - Landlord and Tenant - Tenant Access to Cable Television
Systems and Equipment**
MC 01-22

This bill prohibits landlords in Montgomery County from (1) preventing a cable television company from accessing a dwelling unit for the purpose of constructing, installing, or servicing cable television system equipment if a tenant has requested cable television system service or (2) discriminating in rental or other charges based on a cable television system subscription. The bill authorizes a landlord to require certain compensation in exchange for allowing the installation of cable television system equipment on the property, along with indemnification for any damage that results from the installation or removal of cable television system equipment, as specified. A cable television company may not charge a landlord for the installation of cable television equipment or install a cable television system in an individual dwelling unit without permission from a tenant, as specified. The bill applies only to residential rental property in Montgomery County with more than five residential dwelling units for rent on a single parcel of property or at a single location.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect the operations of the District Court in Montgomery County. State finances are not affected.

Local Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect Montgomery County finances or operations, or circuit court operations.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful.

Analysis

Bill Summary: A tenant, landlord, or cable television company may bring an action in a court of competent jurisdiction to enforce the bill’s provisions. In addition, a county may adopt a local law, ordinance, or regulation to enforce the bill’s provisions.

“Cable television company” means a franchised or private cable television company.

“Cable television system” means a nonbroadcast facility that consists of a set of transmission paths and associated signal generation, reception, and central equipment, under common ownership and control, that distributes or is designed to distribute to subscribers the signals of one or more television broadcast stations. A cable television system does not include a facility that serves (1) 49 or fewer subscribers or (2) only subscribers in one or more multiple dwelling units under common ownership, control, or management.

Current Law: No existing statutory provision regulates the manner in which landlords (statewide or in Montgomery County) may restrict or charge for the installation of cable television systems in dwelling units.

Small Business Effect: Landlords in Montgomery County that are small businesses may be potentially impacted, positively or negatively, by the bill’s requirements governing the manner by which landlords may receive certain compensation in exchange for allowing the installation of cable television system equipment on rental property.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 1371 of 2021, a similar bill, was referred to the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee, but no further action was taken.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Montgomery County; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 25, 2022
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