

# HOUSE BILL 489

E4, C9

5lr2071  
CF SB 436

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By: ~~Delegate Stewart~~ Delegates Stewart, Allen, Boyce, Foley, Holmes, Lehman,  
R. Lewis, and Ziegler

Introduced and read first time: January 20, 2025

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

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Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: February 25, 2025

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## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Department of Labor – Study on Building Code Requirements for**  
3 **Single–Staircase Buildings**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Maryland Department of Labor to study and make  
5 recommendations regarding building code requirements for single–staircase  
6 buildings; and generally relating to building code requirements for single–staircase  
7 buildings.

8 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
9 That:

10 (a) In this section, “Department” means the Maryland Department of Labor.

11 (b) The Department shall:

12 (1) conduct a study on building code requirements for single–staircase  
13 buildings in the State and other states; and

14 (2) make recommendations regarding potential legislative or regulatory  
15 changes to authorize the construction of single–staircase buildings up to six stories above  
16 grade plane in the State for the purpose of increasing the affordable housing supply by  
17 reducing barriers to multifamily housing development.

18 (c) The study shall:

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 (1) survey and document a representative sampling of state and local laws,  
2 ordinances, and policies from across North America;

3 (2) analyze best practices for state and local governments when drafting  
4 building code requirements for single–staircase buildings up to six stories above grade,  
5 taking into consideration the following factors:

6 (i) the availability of an adequate water supply;

7 (ii) the presence and response capability of a professional fire  
8 department;

9 (iii) the practicability or feasibility of compliance with modern fire  
10 codes, including a comparison to the safety of the existing housing supply;

11 (iv) the practicability or feasibility of building in urban or infill  
12 settings;

13 (v) the viability of redevelopment or adaptive reuse of historic  
14 properties;

15 (vi) any impacts of laws, ordinances, or policies on:

16 1. housing development; or

17 2. the cost of housing; and

18 (vii) any other relevant factors, as determined by the Department;  
19 and

20 (3) make legislative and regulatory recommendations, including potential  
21 amendments to the Maryland Building Performance Standards, to authorize the  
22 construction of single–staircase buildings up to six stories above grade plane in the State  
23 for the purpose of increasing the affordable housing supply by reducing barriers to  
24 multifamily housing development.

25 (d) In carrying out the study, the Department shall consult with:

26 (1) the Office of the State Fire Marshal;

27 (2) a fire engineer who is a faculty member at a public institution of higher  
28 education that has a fire protection program; and

29 ~~(2)~~ (3) a representative of a union that represents firefighters.

1 (e) On or before December 1, ~~2025~~ 2026, the Department shall report its findings  
2 and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State  
3 Government Article, the General Assembly, the Senate Education, Energy, and the  
4 Environment Committee, and the House Environment and Transportation Committee.

5 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
6 1, 2025.

Approved:

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Governor.

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Speaker of the House of Delegates.

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President of the Senate.