

Date : 02/27/2023

Re: Delegate Courtney Watson's Bill HB907

We are writing in hopes of encouraging you to vote for HB907. We live in a 5-building neighborhood known at Jefferson Place Condominiums, which is a 55+ condominium community in Howard County. Each building contains 27 units and are 4 stories high. We live on the 4th floor of one of those buildings.

A lightning strike disabled our elevator and we were without elevator service for approximately 3 weeks. Many of the residents in the 135 condominiums have mobility issues, which makes taking the stairs almost impossible when there is no elevator service. In some cases, taking the stairs poses a high safety risk for those that needed to enter and exit the building, but had no other choice but to use the stairs.

Many of the neighbors in our community assisted others by retrieving their mail from the lobby area mailboxes, plus volunteered to get groceries and medicines for those that could not navigate the stairs. However, many of my neighbors had doctor appointments that could not be missed. In one case, one of our residents was an 87-year-old woman who required kidney dialysis 3 times a week, plus she had other medical issues. This required her grandchildren to move her up and down the stairs while she was in her wheelchair.

One of the other buildings had an elevator outage that was over two weeks long. Again, many residents had medical issues that prevented them from using the stairs. Plus, there was one person that had the unfortunate experience of scheduling a moving company to move her out of her condo while the elevator was not working.

Our elevator service contract is restrictive with the threat of penalties and cancellation if we use another service provider that does have the parts needed to fix our elevator. The proposed law seems to be written for apartment complexes, because of the use of Landlord. This law needs to include not just landlords for apartments, but also Board of Directors for condominiums. Also, it should include language that waives all penalties if the landlord or Board finds a faster fix to our problem than the current vendor is able to.

The possibility existed that a local vendor could have supplied the parts needed in a shorter time. However, our service contract for our elevator has language that specifically prohibits getting parts from a different vendor.

We are asking you to consider legislation that could help reduce the length of time that our elevators will be out of service due to the disruptions and we support Bill HB907 or any Bill that allows us to get back to our normal lives as soon as possible and especially because medical and safety issues.

Sincerely,

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