

SB 0970 – SUPPORT

Dylan Owens

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SB 0970 SUPPORT

**Fire Protection and Prevention – Sprinkler Systems and Smoke Alarms –
Requirements (Melanie Diaz Sprinklers Save Lives Act)**

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

March 15th, 2023

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

My name is Dylan Owens, and I am a public health professional born and raised here in Maryland. I am also a friend of Melanie Diaz and her beloved partner, Michael Sobalvarro. On the morning of February 19th, I was informed about the devastating news that she and her two dogs lost their lives during the Arrive apartment complex fire on February 18, 2023, in Silver Spring, MD.

Melanie was the kindest soul who moved here to join the fight against climate change and make the world a better place. She fought bravely and was taken from us far too soon.

The Diaz family has endured what would arguably be anyone's worst nightmare. There is no reason why buildings should be allowed to lack basic protections in 2023, and in Melanie's honor, we have the responsibility to take immediate action on sprinkler system and smoke alarm regulation in order to prevent senseless tragedies like this one from happening in the future and destroying more lives.

I urge a favorable report on SB 0970.

Sincerely,

Dylan Owens