



SCHOLARS
STRATEGY NETWORK

Baltimore City Council Bill 25-0141: The Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act

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Chair Torrence and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Baltimore City Council Bill 25-0141, the Rental Dwelling Health and Safety Enforcement Act.

My name is Dr. Antoine Lovell. I reside in Maryland. I am a housing instability and eviction researcher. I serve as a member of the Research Council for the National Alliance to End Homelessness. I am also a former homeless youth. I wish to testify before you today about the empirical research regarding housing conditions, housing instability, enforcement systems, long-term public expenditure related to unsafe housing conditions, and the broader implications for the financial and social viability of Baltimore City as a result of this legislation.

Empirical studies demonstrate that substandard housing conditions result in a range of adverse effects at the individual, family, and community levels. For example, substandard housing conditions (i.e., mold exposure, rodent infestation, structural deterioration, lead exposure, poor ventilation, and/or lack of adequate heat) have been found to increase asthma, respiratory illness, and mental health issues; increase the risk of developing stress-related health issues; and negatively impact academic performance among children [1-3]. Moreover, housing instability increases the likelihood of homelessness, school mobility, economic uncertainty, and long-term neighborhood disinvestment [4-5].