

SENATE BILL 171

N1, O1

(PRE-FILED)

4r0922
CF HB 139

By: **Senator Augustine**

Requested: October 11, 2023

Introduced and read first time: January 10, 2024

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Landlord and Tenant – Office of Home Energy Programs – Financial Assistance**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring a landlord to accept financial assistance from the Office of
4 Home Energy Programs in the Department of Human Services for the cost of utility
5 services that a tenant is required to pay; requiring a landlord, under certain
6 circumstances, to provide a tenant with utility service documentation that is
7 necessary for the Office to determine the eligibility of the tenant for financial
8 assistance; and generally relating to landlords, tenants, and the Office of Home
9 Energy Programs.

10 BY adding to
11 Article – Real Property
12 Section 8–220
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (2023 Replacement Volume)

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
16 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Real Property

18 **8–220.**

19 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
20 INDICATED.

21 (2) “OFFICE” MEANS THE OFFICE OF HOME ENERGY PROGRAMS IN
22 THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **(3) "UTILITY SERVICE" MEANS FUEL, GAS, ELECTRIC, HEAT, WATER,**
2 **OR A SIMILAR SERVICE PROVIDED BY A PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY THAT IS**
3 **REGULATED BY THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION.**

4 **(B) A LANDLORD SHALL ACCEPT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE**
5 **OFFICE FOR THE COST OF UTILITY SERVICES THAT A TENANT IS REQUIRED TO PAY.**

6 **(C) (1) SUBJECT TO THE CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS OF STATE**
7 **AND FEDERAL LAW, AND UPON THE REQUEST OF A TENANT, A LANDLORD SHALL**
8 **PROVIDE A TENANT WITH UTILITY SERVICE DOCUMENTATION THAT IS:**

9 **(I) ACCESSIBLE TO THE LANDLORD, BUT OTHERWISE**
10 **INACCESSIBLE TO THE TENANT; AND**

11 **(II) NECESSARY FOR THE OFFICE TO DETERMINE THE**
12 **ELIGIBILITY OF THE TENANT FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**

13 **(2) UTILITY SERVICE DOCUMENTATION UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF**
14 **THIS SUBSECTION SHALL:**

15 **(I) BE PROVIDED AT NO COST TO THE TENANT; AND**

16 **(II) INCLUDE BILLS AND OTHER STATEMENTS RELATED TO**
17 **UTILITY SERVICES.**

18 **(D) (1) FOR EACH VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION BY A LANDLORD, THE**
19 **DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES MAY IMPOSE:**

20 **(I) FOR A FIRST OFFENSE, AN ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY OF**
21 **\$500; OR**

22 **(II) FOR A SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE, AN**
23 **ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY OF \$1,000.**

24 **(2) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PAY ANY PENALTY COLLECTED UNDER**
25 **THIS SUBSECTION INTO THE GENERAL FUND OF THE STATE.**

26 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
27 October 1, 2024.