

HB 139

Landlord and Tenant- Office of Home Energy Programs- Financial Assistance

The Maryland Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) has state and local offices and provides energy assistance for low-income households who need support with paying their utility bills, catching up on past due utility bills, protection from utility turn-offs, and completion of weatherization and energy efficiency upgrades.

Households whose utility payments are included in their rents qualify for certain OHEP programs as well. This payment is then credited towards rent for the tenant.

Most landlords have engaged with the program, to the benefit of their tenants. Unfortunately, some landlords have chosen not to accept the payments, which has prevented households from being able to access the vital supports that OHEP offers.

This bill will:

- ✓ Require landlords to accept financial assistance from OHEP on behalf of tenants who qualify and apply for their programs
- ✓ When necessary, require landlords to provide tenants with utility service documentation (at no cost) in order for the tenants to fill out the application materials for OHEP programs
- ✓ Impose fines for landlords who do not comply with these regulations

For more information please contact:

Delegate Lorig Charkoudian, lorig.charkoudian@house.state.md.us

Phone: 410-841-3423