

**TESTIMONY OF
THE APARTMENT ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA
ON SENATE BILL 920
SUBMITTED TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON URBAN AFFAIRS AND HOUSING
JUNE 22, 2011**

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Chairman Yaw and members of the Committee: Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on Senate Bill 920, sponsored by Senator Pat Browne, which would require multi-family homes such as apartment units with fossil fuel heaters, fireplaces or attached garages to install carbon monoxide detectors.

The Apartment Association of Pennsylvania (AAP) is comprised of the Apartment Association of Greater Philadelphia, The Apartment Association of Central Pennsylvania, and the Western Pennsylvania Apartment Association. Together, we represent roughly 300,000 apartment homes throughout the Commonwealth. We are affiliated with the National Apartment Association, the leading advocate for quality rental housing in the United States. Association members are professional owners, managers and developers of quality multi-family rental housing.

AAP is the foremost authority on the apartment industry in Pennsylvania, and we actively promote responsible property management. Our members regularly avail themselves of our nationally recognized education programs that include topics on property maintenance and safety, code compliance, and fair housing. Our Certification courses in Apartment Management and Maintenance are the most highly regarded in the industry.

We do not oppose requiring carbon monoxide alarms in single family homes or multi-family homes. Carbon monoxide alarms are a proven safety device. In fact, many AAP members currently provide them in their rental units. SB 920 contains effective requirements for carbon monoxide alarms. But the current bill needs additional language to assure it provides its important intended protections without creating the risk of serious financial harm to rental owners.

SB 920 in its current form places rental owners in jeopardy of being targeted by specious legal action and excessive local requirements.

SB 920 rightly requires rental occupants to keep, maintain and replace carbon monoxide alarms and batteries during their occupancies and notify owners in writing of any deficiencies pertaining to the alarms. But rental owners are inadequately protected from liability should occupants fail to comply with its provisions.

We therefore respectfully request language that states no person shall have a claim for relief against a property owner, an authorized agent of a property owner, a person in possession of real property or an installer for any damages resulting from the operation, maintenance or effectiveness of a carbon monoxide alarm if the property owner, authorized agent, person in possession of real property or installer installs a carbon monoxide alarm in accordance with the manufacturer's published instructions and the provisions of the act.

Additionally, we respectfully request the language be changed to preempt municipal, county or other local government entities from adopting or enforcing any requirements for the installation and maintenance of carbon monoxide alarms that are more stringent than the requirements set forth in the act. This would prevent an overly burdensome entanglement of regulations being unnecessarily imposed on rental owners trying to maintain properties throughout the Commonwealth.

Again, thank you for this chance to present our views. I would be happy to discuss them in greater detail or answer any questions you may have.