

Chapter 704

(House Bill 878)

AN ACT concerning

**Howard County – Department of Housing and Community Development –
Housing Opportunities Trust Fund**

Ho. Co. 05–22

FOR the purpose of establishing the Housing Opportunities Trust Fund as a nonreverting special fund to be used to promote equitable access to affordable housing for households of limited income in Howard County; requiring the Department of Housing and Community Development for Howard County to report on the activity of the Fund during the prior fiscal year on or before a certain date each year; and generally relating to funding for affordable housing in Howard County.

BY adding to

The Public Local Laws of Howard County

Section 13.1600 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 16. Housing Opportunities Trust Fund Authorization”

Article 14 – Public Local Laws of Maryland

(1995 Edition and August 2008 Supplement, as amended)

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

Article 14 – Howard County

SUBTITLE 16. HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES TRUST FUND AUTHORIZATION.

13.1600.

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

(2) “FUND” MEANS THE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES TRUST FUND.

(3) “HOUSEHOLD OF LIMITED INCOME” MEANS A HOUSEHOLD WITH AN ANNUAL INCOME OF NOT MORE THAN 80% OF THE MEDIAN INCOME FOR HOWARD COUNTY.

(B) THERE IS ESTABLISHED A NONREVERTING SPECIAL REVENUE FUND KNOWN AS THE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES TRUST FUND.

(C) (1) THE FUND CONSISTS OF:

- (I) MONEY APPROPRIATED UNDER THE COUNTY'S BUDGETARY PROCESS;**
- (II) ANY GIFT OR GRANT OF MONEY MADE TO THE FUND;**
- (III) PAYMENTS MADE ON LOANS FROM THE FUND; AND**
- (IV) EARNINGS OF THE FUND.**

(2) MONEY OF THE FUND MAY BE INVESTED CONSISTENT WITH THE INVESTMENT POLICY OF HOWARD COUNTY.

(D) (1) THE FUND SHALL BE USED TO PROMOTE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR HOUSEHOLDS OF LIMITED INCOME IN HOWARD COUNTY.

(2) AUTHORIZED USES OF THE FUND INCLUDE:

- (I) PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO RENTERS AND FIRST-TIME HOME BUYERS;**
- (II) DEVELOPING, PRESERVING, REHABILITATING, AND IMPROVING AFFORDABLE HOUSING, INCLUDING AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING; AND**
- (III) INCREASING, BY ANY OTHER MEANS, THE AFFORDABILITY OR ACCESSIBILITY OF HOUSING FOR HOUSEHOLDS OF LIMITED INCOME IN HOWARD COUNTY.**

(E) (1) SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IS AUTHORIZED TO ADMINISTER THE FUND FOR THE PURPOSE ESTABLISHED IN SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION BY ISSUING LOANS, GRANTS, GUARANTEES, OR DIRECT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS, NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS, OR DEVELOPERS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

(2) (I) A MINIMUM OF 50% OF THE EXPENDITURES FROM THE FUND IN A FISCAL YEAR SHALL BENEFIT HOUSEHOLDS WITH AN ANNUAL INCOME OF NOT MORE THAN 50% OF THE MEDIAN INCOME FOR HOWARD COUNTY.

(II) A MINIMUM OF 40% OF THE EXPENDITURES IDENTIFIED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH SHALL BENEFIT HOUSEHOLDS WITH AN ANNUAL INCOME OF NOT MORE THAN 30% OF THE MEDIAN INCOME FOR HOWARD COUNTY.

(F) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2023, AND EACH DECEMBER 1 THEREAFTER, THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SHALL PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL, THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE, AND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE OF THE ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND, THE HOWARD COUNTY DELEGATION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE ACTIVITY OF THE FUND DURING THE PRIOR FISCAL YEAR.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2022.

Enacted under Article II, § 17(c) of the Maryland Constitution, May 29, 2022.