



Senator Paul G. Pinsky
Chairman Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

February 27, 2020

Testimony in support of **Bill SB0946** Housing and Community Development - Neighborhood Revitalization – ‘Passive House Pilot Program’, Sponsored by Senator Hayes

Dear Chairman Pinsky, and Members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee:

I am a Registered Architect, Certified Passive House Consultant and since 2007 have been a full-time faculty member at Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD (MICA) where I chair of the Department of Architectural Design. I am passionate about engaging the neighborhoods of Baltimore in my teaching and practice.

In 2018 I began an initiative at MICA called the ‘Sustainable Reuse of Baltimore’s Vacant Buildings’. I invited many experts, activists, City Planners and others to speak at MICA and taught three courses with students from MICA and from Johns Hopkins University. Together we studied various design scenarios of rehabilitating vacant row-homes as Affordable Housing and studied the energy efficiency and environmental impact of these designs.

It may seem counter-intuitive that High Performance building design particularly Passive House design, is well suited for Affordable Housing. One seems to belong to the high-end market of construction while the other usually to the cheapest. But in cities like New York City, Philadelphia and Pittsburg this unlikely marriage is taking place much to the benefit of their residents and their environments.

The Passive House design methodology is all about applying science to our buildings and doing right by the residents of these projects. It offers ‘energy security’ to resident families - a chance to diminish utility bills by up to 90% in order to free up resources for their home mortgage or other essential needs. It also makes for a healthy home with a carefully balanced environment,

constant filtered fresh air. The elimination of asthma triggers like mold and VOCs is particularly relevant to Baltimore City where children suffer more than two times the national rate of asthma incidents. Passive House is also a building design method that is highly sustainable. These buildings will last much longer than normal construction and be more resilient to power outages, by taking a long time to heat up or cool down if grid power fails.

The Passive House Pilot program that Michael Rosenband and I are developing aims to provide such benefits to the residents of the Matthew Henson neighborhood but more ambitiously leverage these projects to teach young people how to build for the future. We will partner with Carver VoTech as a base for teaching and training youth - not only their students but also draw upon other city youths who can benefit from our program.

The Affordable Housing we seek is permanent and to this end we will partner with Community Land Trusts (CLT) that will steward the project into the future as Affordable Housing. CLTs are shown to reduce foreclosures and evictions and provide social support to the resident families when in financial difficulty.

Last but not least as a pilot our project looks forward to future iterations of developing vacant building into energy efficient Affordable Housing. The Passive House Pilot project is Baltimore's pathway to Passive House designed Affordable Housing. Most of its benefits have been proven in many neighboring Cities but it also leverages Baltimore's unique resources and assets. It will have a positive impact on the city's neighborhoods, youth and environment. For all these reasons we ask that you support Bill 0946 sponsored by Senator Hayes.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have. I can be reached by email at taziz@mica.edu or phone at 443.525.7375. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timmy Aziz". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Timmy Aziz R.A., CPHC

Full time Faculty and Chair, Department of Architectural Design
Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD