



House Bill 231 – Housing Opportunities Made Equal Act

February 4, 2020 – House Environment and Transportation Committee

Favorable with Amendment

The Maryland Bankers Association (MBA) supports HB 231 – Housing Opportunities Made Equal Act with amendments. MBA’s members are comprised of community banks and savings and loans, regional banks and large banking companies with a national presence. The 88 banks operating in Maryland hold employ 26,000 men and women. Maryland’s banks serve communities, consumers and businesses across the State through nearly 1,490 branches.

MBA’s member institutions are in the business of residential mortgage lending. Both federal and state laws require mortgage lenders to investigate and verify a borrower’s income to determine the borrower’s ability to repay a mortgage loan before making the loan. MBA’s amendment clarifies that activity to determine a borrower’s ability to repay a mortgage loan does not violate Maryland’s fair housing law.

For these reasons, MBA urges the Committee to adopt MBA’s clarifying amendments below:

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 231

(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 6, in line 30, after “RENTER;” strike “OR”; and on that same page, in line 32, after “CRIMINAL” strike “ACTIVITY” and substitute “ACTIVITY; OR (3) PROHIBIT A PERSON FROM DETERMINING THE POTENTIAL BUYER’S ABILITY TO REPAY A MORTGAGE LOAN AS PROVIDED BY APPLICABLE LAW”.

Explanation: Both federal and state laws require mortgage lenders to investigate and verify a borrower’s income to determine the borrower’s ability to repay a mortgage loan before making the loan. This amendment clarifies that activity to determine a borrower’s ability to repay a mortgage loan does not violate Maryland’s fair housing law.

Offered by the Maryland Bankers Association