



EASTSIDE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, INC.

**Testimony HB 472 –
Housing – Community Development Fund Program Act Funding
February 11, 2019
Position: FAVORABLE**

Dear Chairman Barve and the Members of the House Environment & Transportation:

We urge this committee to vote a favorable report for HB 472 – Housing – Community Development Fund Program Act - Funding HB 472 creates a permanent funding source for the Community Development Fund which was created during the 2018 legislative session. The funding will be critical operating dollars to use for community development organizations to apply for affordable housing, neighborhood and commercial revitalization, housing and financial counseling, small business development, community services, and more. The funding source is \$5 million from surplus of the Unclaimed Property Fund.

Eastside Community Development Corporation is a Community Development Corporation (CDC) that also performs the work done by Local Housing Counseling Agencies (LHCA) and Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO). Specifically, the agency has for many years assisted new first time homebuying families with meeting the requirements necessary to purchase a home. Improving credit scores, attaining a home purchase loan, identifying the an appropriate, affordable home, qualifying for available home purchase incentive programs are just a few of the areas of concern that Eastside educates the new homebuyer in understanding. Eastside, also, continues as an agency that assists families burdened by financial crisis in maintaining homeownership. Finally, beginning in 2016, the agency began developing housing projects with a focus on the Turner Station, a community where hundreds of families have been impacted by the loss of the steel and ship-building industries along with associated jobs.

In order to continue performing these activities Eastside needs the erosion of operating dollars provided by government partners to cease. Due to diminishing staffing the number of local constituents the agency is able to serve diminishes as well. The agency will be able to assist more first-time buyers in preparing for homeownership, while at the same time creating new affordable rental properties for the homeless in eastern Baltimore county, if necessary additional operating funding is provided.

Please vote a favorable report for HB 472

Respectfully Submitted: Rick Davis, Executive Director