



House Bill 472 – Housing – Community Development Program Act – Funding

Position: Support

Maryland REALTORS® support HB 472 which requires the Comptroller to distribute any funds in the Abandoned Property Special Fund to the Community Development Program Fund (CDPF), rather than the general fund.

The National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) conducts an annual survey of homebuyers and sellers and noted that first-time buyers over the last few years are at a historically smaller share of the market than at any time in the last 30 years. The percentage of first-time buyers fell from an average of 40% to 33 % nationally in 2015 and remains at 33% in 2019. Additionally, the homeownership rate in Maryland has dropped from 69.9% in 2000 to 66.6% in 2018.

HB 472 increases available money for programs like affordable housing and neighborhood revitalization and targets populations that have the most difficulty making the transition to homeownership. By improving the quality of neighborhoods, HB 472, will help to increase property values for current homeowners too.

Other valuable programs of the Community Development Program Fund (CDPF) include housing counseling, financial counseling, and foreclosure prevention. The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Maryland Mortgage Programs require housing counseling to participate in Maryland's downpayment assistance and low interest mortgages. Unfortunately, eligible buyers sometimes wait a long time for an available course. Additional funding will help this problem.

For these reasons, the Maryland REALTORS® recommends a favorable report.

**For more information contact bill.castelli@mdrealtor.org or
susan.mitchell@mrealtor.org**