

**SB315\_HousingInnovPilotProgramAct2023\_LOS\_CF.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brian Sims

Position: FAV



Maryland  
Hospital Association

February 13, 2023

To: The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Re: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 315 - Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund - Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)

Dear Chair Feldman:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of Senate Bill 315, which would establish a fund in the Department of Housing and Community Development to provide loans to local housing authorities for mixed-income, cross-subsidized housing and increase the volume of housing production. Access to quality, affordable, and stable housing leads to better health outcomes.

Maryland hospitals care for millions of people each year, around-the-clock. In addition to the care they provide, they continuously evaluate factors inside and outside of their organizations to promote the health and the well-being of the populations they serve and the tens of thousands they employ. Hospitals are committed to addressing the social drivers of health, which includes cross-sector collaboration.

The Department of Health and Human Services defines housing insecurity as high housing costs in proportion to income, poor housing quality, unstable neighborhoods, overcrowding, or homelessness.<sup>1</sup> As an important social determinant of health, housing security must be addressed when developing goals for accessibility or quality of care. Unstable housing can increase the risk of infectious or chronic disease and exacerbate previously existing health conditions.<sup>2</sup> SB 315 would help local housing authorities increase the production of affordable housing units.

Housing is one of the best-researched social determinants of health and addressing housing insecurity has been found to improve health outcomes and decrease health care costs.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report on SB 315.

For more information, please contact:  
Brian Sims, Vice President, Quality & Equity  
Bsims@mhaonline.org

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<sup>1</sup> Cutts, D. B., Meyers, A. F., Black, M. M., Casey, P. H., Chilton, M., Cook, J. T., Geppert, J., Ettinger de Cuba, S., Heeren, T., Coleman, S., Rose-Jacobs, R. Frank, D. A. (2011). US Housing insecurity and the health of very young children. *American journal of public health*, 101(8), 1508-14. Retrieved from: [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3134514/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3134514/)

<sup>2</sup> Taylor, L. (2018). Housing and Health: An Overview of the Literature. *Health Affairs*. Retrieved from: <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hpb20180313.396577/>.

**SB0315-EEE\_MACo\_SUP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Dominic Butchko

Position: FAV



## Senate Bill 315

*Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund - Establishment  
(Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment  
Committee

Date: February 14, 2023

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 315. This bill would provide counties with additional resources through the Housing Innovation Pilot Program, incentivizing the development of county-owned affordable housing projects.

The economic reverberations from the COVID-19 pandemic are still felt in nearly all parts of the economy, but nowhere more so than in the housing market. Due to a variety of historic and economic factors, the production and preservation of affordable housing stock has lagged behind the growth of our society. Today the cost of housing has become a significant line item in many household budgets, far exceeding the longtime standard of 30 percent of gross income.

SB 315 would provide a significant tool for jurisdictions seeking to take direct action in their local housing markets. The program would provide dollar-for-dollar matching funds for county housing projects meeting certain state criteria. These matching funds would take the form of either low or no interest loans, both giving the state a renewable programmatic funding source and counties access to low-cost capital.

SB 315 creates a program that is renewable and empowers local governments to do more in ensuring access to affordable housing. For this reason, MACo **SUPPORTS** SB 315 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report.

# **Final - SB315 Testimony - Housing Innovation Act.p**

Uploaded by: Fiona Mesfun

Position: FAV



100 North Charles Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

410-223-2222  
[www.brhp.org](http://www.brhp.org)

February 13, 2023

Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair  
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair  
2 West  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: Support for Senate Bill 315 – Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund – Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)  
Hearing before the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee on February 14, 2023**

**Position: Support (FAV)**

Dear Honorable Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf the Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership (BRHP). I am writing to express our support for Senate Bill 315. This legislation will establish the Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund to address the affordable housing shortage within Maryland by providing a tool to local Housing Authorities to produce mixed-income affordable housing.

The Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership (BRHP) is a non-profit organization that expands housing choices for families with low incomes, who have historically been excluded from housing in well-resourced neighborhoods, helping them to access and transition successfully to safe, healthy, and economically vibrant communities. As the Regional Administrator for the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program, BRHP has opened pathways to a better future for low-income families for nearly 10 years. BRHP currently provides over 4,300 low-income families rental assistance in the form of the Housing Choice Vouchers and couples that with counseling supports for families as they move from areas of concentrated poverty to areas of opportunity in Baltimore City and the five surrounding counties.

BRHP is dedicated to helping achieve racially and socially equitable public policy that ensures low-income families have access to quality and affordable homes in communities of their choice. **We support SB 315 because this legislation will build upon the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County's innovative techniques and financial models to create and preserve affordable housing across Maryland.** This bill is one of the many tools needed to curtail the revolving door of poverty and housing instability in Maryland and will give local Housing Authorities a sorely needed mechanism to increase the number and quality of affordable rental housing in their jurisdictions.

### Background

The Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership is an equal housing opportunity provider.





100 North Charles Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

410-223-2222

[www.brhp.org](http://www.brhp.org)

There is a critical lack of affordable housing options for low-income individuals and families in Maryland. Maryland is the 8th most unaffordable state for housing. In comparison to surrounding states, our state falls behind in affordable housing production and is failing to address our worsening housing crisis. Overall, DHCD projected a need for 120,486 additional units of affordable housing by 2014. Over a decade later, the State has made inadequate progress towards meeting the needs outlined in the report, as the Department of Legislative Services recently noted federal data showing “there is a shortage of approximately 190,700 affordable rental housing units [in Maryland] for families earning less than 50% of the area median income. <sup>i</sup>Maryland needs a comprehensive approach to mitigating the current housing crisis, which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, that must include as many useful tools as possible.

#### Equity Implications

This legislation will aid in breaking the bonds of social stratification along dimensions of socio-economic status and race. Blacks or African Americans have one of the lowest levels of household income both in Maryland and nationally when comparing income levels by race or ethnicity. Furthermore, data regarding renters and general median income demographics indicate that renters in Maryland are more likely to be minority, low-income, or spend a disproportionate amount of income on rent. <sup>ii</sup> With housing being one of the most researched social determinants of health, a vast library of literature determines a direct link between expanded access to affordable housing and improvements in family stability, economic growth, education retention, and health outcomes. Housing matters not only for the immediate well-being of individuals and families, but also for the life-chances of the subsequent generation. Historically, black and brown communities bear the brunt of unjust housing policies that continue to impede progress towards building wealth and housing equity. Senate Bill 315 will aid in reversing the legacy of harmful and unjust housing policies while making tangible progress towards creating more inclusive and affordable housing in Maryland.

BRHP appreciates your consideration and **urges the Committee to issue a favorable report for SB 315.**

Sincerely,

Adria Crutchfield  
Executive Director  
Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership

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<sup>i</sup> Governor’s Commission on Housing Policy. (2004.) Innovative Housing and Community Revitalization in Maryland: Solutions for a Positive Change.

<sup>ii</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2021



# **SB 315 testimony in support.pdf**

Uploaded by: Gregory Countess

Position: FAV





February 13, 2023

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman  
Chairman Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 315**

Dear Chairperson Feldman and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 315, legislation that would create housing to break down the stratification between those renters with different incomes, and requiring any housing built to have affordability restrictions of 99 years. This letter serves as notice that Gregory Countess will be testifying on behalf of Maryland Legal Aid (MLA), at the request of Senator Jeff Waldstreicher.

MLA is a non-profit law firm that provides free legal services to the State's low-income and vulnerable residents. MLA handles civil legal cases involving a wide range of issues, including representing people and families struggling with housing and eviction.

The human right to housing is one of the most essential and universally recognized human rights. It finds strong recognition in international, federal, and state. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees "the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of [the individual] and of his[her] family, including food, clothing, shelter and medical care and necessary social services."<sup>1</sup> One of the basic aspects of the right to housing is that such housing should be affordable.<sup>2</sup>

By any measure, housing is not affordable for thousands of residents throughout Maryland. The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development commissioned a study released in December of 2020 that measured housing need in this state. The report noted that, "Despite continued progress, ... Maryland currently lacks approximately 85,000 rental units for its lowest income households (meaning extremely low-income or those earning 30 percent of area median income [AMI (Area Median Income)] or below). In many parts of the state, there aren't enough rental units for very low-income households (those earning under 50 percent AMI) either. Maryland will add an estimated 97,200 extremely and very low-income households between 2020 and 2030. Without further acceleration to create and preserve deeply affordable units, this shortage will worsen."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, G.A. Res. 217, U.N. GAOR, 3d Sess., pt. 1, U.N. Doc. A/810 (1948).

<sup>2</sup> General Comment 4, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, U.N. Doc. E/1992/23, ¶6 (1991).

<sup>3</sup> <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Documents/Other%20Publications/Report.pdf>

SB 315 is an important affirmative step in increasing the supply of affordable housing to Maryland renters, particularly if the bill grants maximum flexibility to Housing Authorities to establish a one-for-one match of Housing Authority funds to program funds.

By providing opportunity for Housing Authorities to reduce economic stratification by not mandating that the housing serve only those with incomes below 60 percent of AMI, while also requiring that any housing built using the fund have affordability restrictions of 99 years the bill provides an incentive to build communities of opportunity while also building housing that is permanently affordable.

For these reasons we urge a favorable report for SB 315.

Sincerely,

/GC/

Gregory Countess, Esq.  
Director of Advocacy for Housing and Community Economic Development  
Maryland Legal Aid  
410 951 7687

# **WDC 2023 Testimony SB0315\_Final.pdf**

Uploaded by: JoAnne Koravos

Position: FAV



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND  
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

[www.womensdemocraticclub.org](http://www.womensdemocraticclub.org)

**Senate Bill 315 – Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund  
– Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)  
Education, Energy, and Environment Committee – February 14, 2023  
SUPPORT**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2023 legislative session. WDC is one of the largest and most active Democratic clubs in our county with hundreds of politically active members, including many elected officials.

**WDC urges the passage of SB0315.** This bill will provide creative affordable housing opportunities for low-and moderate-income families in Maryland.

Maryland is facing a significant affordable housing crisis. A 2021 report commissioned by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development found that the state currently lacks 85,000 rental units for low-and moderate-income families. This number is expected to increase appreciably over the next ten years. As rents in the state have skyrocketed by more than 30 percent in the last decade, low-and moderate-income families find themselves left behind, as they face housing insecurity, inability to pay rent, and potential homelessness.

The Housing Innovation Pilot Program creates opportunities and incentives for local affordable housing production. It establishes a five-year pilot program to reward counties that use innovative methods to fund affordable housing. The program provides matching funds for projects that will remain in public ownership and that meet affordability set-asides. The project must set aside 20% of units for residents with a household income under 50% Area Mean Income (AMI) or 40% of units for residents with a household income under 60% AMI.

All Maryland families deserve access to affordable, quality housing. **We ask for your support for SB0315 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.**

Diana E. Conway  
WDC President

Janet Frank  
WDC Advocacy Committee

**SB 315\_MD Center on Economic Policy\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kali Schumitz

Position: FAV

# Marylanders Need More Affordable Housing Options

## Position Statement Supporting Senate Bill 315

*Given before the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee*

SB 315 will establish the Housing Innovation Pilot Program in the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to provide low or no interest loans for certain mixed-income and cross-subsidized housing projects. DHCD will distribute the loans directly to local housing authorities to fund these affordable housing projects. The goal of this pilot program is to create opportunities for the state's public housing authorities to increase the volume of housing production by offering an incentive of providing state matching funds for housing innovation projects funded through local revolving loan funds. **The Maryland Center on Economic Policy supports Senate Bill 315 because it will increase affordable housing options for the state's most vulnerable renters.**

SB 315 will provide new housing opportunities in which:

- At least 20% of the units are set aside for households with a gross annual income of not more than 50% of the area median income for a household of like size
- At least 40% of the units are set aside for households with a gross income of not more than 60% of the area median income for a household of like size
- The affordable units set aside remain restricted at elevated levels for at least 99 years
- The project remains in public ownership

In administering the funds, DHCD will prioritize funding projects that:

- Do not use low-income housing tax credit equity or tax-exempt volume cap
- Commit to prevailing wage requirements

Before any funds will be administered, local housing authorities will be required to provide evidence that the program funds will be matched by their funding on a dollar-for-dollar basis as well as meet other criteria adopted by the Secretary. In return, DHCD will coordinate with local housing authorities to ensure access to other financial resources such as senior debt products and develop new resources in support of statewide housing production. If passed, SB 315 will be a 5-year pilot program that would be in effect from July 2023-June 2028.

SB 315 is being introduced at a very important time in Maryland as housing prices are soaring due to inflation and the effects of the pandemic. However, even before COVID, Maryland had an affordable housing problem. According to the Maryland Housing Needs Assessment, nearly one-third of all Maryland households are

experiencing housing cost burdens.<sup>i</sup> Of these, 67% are homeowners while 33% are renters. Among renters, 48% of those households are cost burdened, and among low-income households, 76% are severely cost-burdened.

The latest Out of Reach report from the National Low Income Housing Coalition lists Maryland as the ninth least affordable state for renters.<sup>ii</sup> To afford a modest two-bedroom apartment in the state, a family must earn \$28.93 an hour or \$60,183 annually. A minimum wage worker in Maryland would have to work 78 hours per week year-round.

When families struggle to pay rent, they face greater risks of instability, eviction, and even homelessness, which research links to food insecurity, poor health, lower cognitive scores and academic achievement, and more frequent foster care placement among children. Seniors and the disabled, on fixed incomes, cannot live safely without affordable housing and supportive services.

Unaffordable and unstable housing perpetuates racial, economic and health disparities in our state. If we want to close disparities between white, black and brown Marylanders, we must begin with housing. We cannot write a prescription for housing but that is what many in our state need to stabilize their health. We must make homeownership available to more people of color throughout the state.

For the past couple of years, Maryland has had a surplus in state funding. The surplus is a historic opportunity to provide investment for housing affordability, security, and stability in every area in our state. HB 60 is a step in the right direction because affordable housing is a foundation for all Marylanders. For these reasons, **the Maryland Center on Economic Policy respectfully requests the Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee to make a favorable report on Senate Bill 315.**

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## Equity Impact Analysis: Senate Bill 315

### *Bill Summary*

SB 315 will establish the Housing Innovation Pilot Program in the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to provide low or no interest loans for certain mixed-income and cross-subsidized housing projects. DHCD will distribute the loans directly to local housing authorities to fund these affordable housing projects. The goal of this pilot program is to create opportunities for the state's public housing authorities to increase the volume of housing production by offering an incentive of providing state matching funds for housing innovation projects funded through local revolving loan funds.

### *Background*

SB 315 is being introduced at a very important time in Maryland as housing prices are soaring due to inflation and the effects of the pandemic. However, even before Covid, Maryland had an affordable housing problem. According to the Maryland Housing Needs Assessment, nearly one-third of all Maryland households are experiencing housing cost burdens. Of these, 67% are homeowners while 33% are renters. Among renters, 48% of those households are cost burdened, and among low-income households, 76% are severely cost-burdened.

The latest Out of Reach report from the National Low Income Housing Coalition lists Maryland as the ninth least affordable state for renters. To afford a modest two-bedroom apartment in the state, a family must earn \$28.93 an hour or \$60,183 annually. A minimum wage worker in Maryland would have to work 78 hours per week year-round.

### *Equity Implications*

When families struggle to pay rent, they face greater risks of instability, eviction, and even homelessness, which research links to food insecurity, poor health, lower cognitive scores and academic achievement, and more frequent foster care placement among children. Seniors and the disabled on fixed incomes cannot live safely without affordable housing and supportive services.

Unaffordable and unstable housing perpetuates racial and economic and health disparities in our state. If we want to close disparities between white and black and brown Marylanders, we must begin with housing. We cannot write a prescription for housing but that is what many in our state need to stabilize their health. We must make homeownership available to more people of color throughout the state.

### *Impact*

SB 315 will likely **improve racial, health and economic equity** in Maryland.

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<sup>i</sup> Maryland 10 Year Housing Assessment <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Documents/Other%20Publications/Report.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> National Low Income Housing Coalition <https://nlihc.org/oor/state/md>



# **HOC - SB315 - Support w Amendments.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ken Silverman

Position: FAV



**Chelsea Andrews**  
Executive Director

February 14, 2023

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

The Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County (HOC) strongly supports Senator Waldstreicher's proposed legislation to establish a Housing Innovation Fund in Maryland and provide matching funds for the production of new mixed-income housing by Public Housing Authorities.

As Montgomery County's Public Housing Authority, HOC has been developing mixed-income "Opportunity" housing since its reorganization in 1974. In recent years, Montgomery County has partnered with HOC to amp up our production of market rate, workforce, and low-income housing by creating a \$100 million Housing Production Fund (HPF). This revolving fund provides low-cost, short-term construction financing for new housing development that provides a minimum of 20% of units affordable at 50% of Area Median Income (AMI) or below, and an additional 10% of units affordable at the level of the County's Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program - 65-70% of AMI or below. The Commission seeks to provide deeper affordability whenever possible.

The first \$50 million tranche of HPF funding was authorized by the Montgomery County Council in 2021, and was quickly committed to two projects projected to deliver over 700 units of new housing. The Laureate at Shady Grove Metro station is expected to begin leasing this spring. Hillandale Gateway, in East County, is expected to break ground this year and is planned to include Maryland's first net zero energy, passive house multifamily residential building. Each of these projects are served by transit, will include community-serving retail, and are being delivered as public-private partnerships. After the first \$50 million tranche was committed, the County authorized a second \$50 million tranche in the spring of 2022.

Once development is completed and the HPF is repaid, each of these projects must remain owned or controlled by HOC. Ongoing public ownership ensures ongoing affordability, allows the provision of wrap-around services, and produces growing equity that can be used to provide more housing in the coming decades. Tenant protections - such as HOC's policy of abiding by Montgomery County's Voluntary Rent Guidelines - provide stability for all tenants, including those in market-rate units. And the funding that is repaid goes back into the HPF, becoming available for use in another new development. Critically, this funding is additive to the existing tools for developing affordable housing, such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.

This model has attracted national attention. It can be called public development, social housing, or mixed-income housing. Legislation to adopt versions of this approach has recently been introduced in California, Washington state, Washington D.C., Maine and Rhode Island.

We applaud Sen. Waldstreicher and Del. Stewart for their vision and appreciate their willingness to work with us on clarifying amendments that ensure this fund is compatible with existing federal, state and local policies. By creating a Housing Innovation Fund to provide matching funds for local initiatives such as the HPF, Maryland can ensure production of stable, affordable housing across the State. This fund would allow local Authorities to produce more housing using local funding models that work for each individual jurisdiction.

Sincerely,

*Chelsea Andrews*

Chelsea Andrews  
Executive Director

# **SB 315 Housing pilot program.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kenneth Phelps, Jr.

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 0315:**

**Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation  
Fund - Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act  
of 2023)**

**\*\*FAVORABLE\*\***

**TO:** Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair, Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair, and the members of the Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

**FROM:** Rev. Linda K. Boyd, Co-Chair, Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network, Diocese of Maryland

**DATE:** February 14, 2023

This bill, in part, establishes a fund to provide loans from State matching funds for local housing authorities throughout the State to develop mixed-income, cross-subsidized housing. This would increase the volume of housing units available to lower income households.

Affordable housing is increasingly impossible for low-income households to find. As a result, many households are forced to be homeless. Such a situation is intolerable for anyone. Affordable housing is an important element that enables a household to thrive. We believe that each person is a beloved child of God and deserves dignity and respect. Affordable housing would assist in achieving that goal.

We respectfully request a favorable report.

# **Feldman SB0315- Housing Innovation Pilot Program a**

Uploaded by: Leonard Lucchi

Position: FAV



# CITY OF COLLEGE PARK

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL

7401 BALTIMORE AVENUE SUITE 201 COLLEGE PARK MD 20740 | COLLEGEPAKMD.GOV

February 6, 2023

## MAYOR

Patrick L. Wojahn

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Senator Brian Feldman, Chair  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: SB0351 Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund - Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)**

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members:

The College Park City Council voted unanimously during our meeting on January 31, 2023 to support SB0351, which would establish the Housing Innovation Pilot Program in the Department of Housing and Community Development. This program would provide critical funds for certain mixed-income, cross-subsidized housing developments, helping meet a huge need for affordable housing and innovation in how it is created.

Thank you for consideration of the City's position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pat. Wojahn".

Patrick Wojahn  
Mayor

cc: 21st District Delegation

# **SB 315 - Housing Innovation Fund - FAV - REALTORS.**

Uploaded by: Lisa May

Position: FAV





**Senate Bill 315 – Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund - Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)**

**Position: Support**

Maryland REALTORS® supports efforts to increase the supply of housing options in Maryland through legislation like SB 315. This establishes a funding mechanism to provide affordable housing options at a variety of price points for Maryland residents.

Maryland currently faces a shortage of nearly 120,000 housing units and growing. This shortage now impacts not just low-income residents, but also those of moderate incomes, young professionals, seniors, and working families. It encompasses not only what has been traditionally considered as “affordable housing” but also “missing middle” housing types.

Housing at or below the 60% of AMI threshold is among the hardest to produce and cannot be accomplished in the marketplace without significant funding and programmatic supports. If adopted, this bill would assist with both of those needs to expand affordable housing production.

There is no single answer to this housing shortage. Rather, it will take many modest actions that when taken together begin to make a difference. Maryland officials at both the state and local levels will need to work closely with one another and seek new ways of providing the housing that our residents need. The status quo is no longer an option.

Maryland REALTORS® applaud efforts to ease our housing crisis and reduce our current 120,000-unit housing shortage. We ask for your support of Senate Bill 315.

**For more information contact  
lisa.may@mdrealtor.org or christa.mcgee@mdrealtor.org**

# **2023 SB315 - Housing Innovation Pilot Program.Test**

Uploaded by: Martha Nathanson

Position: FAV



## CARE BRAVELY

SB315 – Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund – Establishment (House Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)

House Environment and Transportation Committee – February 14, 2023

Testimony of Martha D. Nathanson, Esq., Vice President, Government Relations and Community Development LifeBridge Health

Position: **SUPPORT**

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I am writing in SUPPORT of SB315. LifeBridge Health is a regional health system comprising Sinai Hospital of Baltimore, an independent academic medical center; Levindale Geriatric Center and Hospital in Baltimore; Northwest Hospital, a community hospital in Baltimore County; Carroll Hospital, a sole community hospital in Carroll County, and; Grace Medical Center in Baltimore (formerly Bon Secours Hospital).

This bill establishes the Housing Innovation Pilot Program in the Department of Housing and Community Development to provide funds for certain mixed-income, cross-subsidized housing and to create opportunities to increase the volume of housing production; establishing the Housing Innovation Fund as a special, non-lapsing fund to be used only to provide low- or no-interest loans to local housing authorities; etc.

Our communities identify housing as one of the top three most important problems affecting the health of the community. (2021 Grace Medical Center and Sinai Hospital Community Health Needs Assessments). Individual decisions to stay at home are complicated by housing conditions within their communities, especially within historically underserved, predominately African American, low-income neighborhoods found in LifeBridge's Service Area.

Ensuring that all families live in affordable, stable homes will improve community health outcomes, thereby reducing health care and education costs. Building a firm foundation for stable homes begins with policies that provide opportunities for families to afford to rent or buy decent homes necessary for good health. Given the health, educational, and cost implications of families living in unstable homes, there is an urgent need to increase supply of affordable homes and help families meet rent demands and reduce costs.

Local governments and the development community needs more funds that are flexible to produce and preserve affordable housing across the state. In order for Maryland to be a state with opportunity, decision makers will need to invest at the intersection between housing and health, housing and economic development and housing and education.

For all the above stated reasons, we request a **FAVORABLE** report for SB315.

Contact: Martha D. Nathanson, Esq.  
Vice President, Government Relations & Community Development  
[mnathans@lifebridgehealth.org](mailto:mnathans@lifebridgehealth.org)  
Mobile: 443-286-4812

**Economic Action Maryland\_SB315\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Michael Donnelly

Position: FAV

**Testimony to the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**  
**SB315: Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund – Establishment**  
**(Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)**  
**Position: Favorable**

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February 14, 2023

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair  
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
cc: Members, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Honorable Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

Economic Action Maryland is a nonprofit organization that works statewide to advance economic justice and equity through direct-service, research, and advocacy.

We are writing in support of Senate Bill 315.

Our Tenant Advocacy program assists renters and property owners with housing issues. We provide information and referrals to other agencies and organizations when necessary. Through our daily work we see the profound negative impacts Marylanders face because of our state's lack of safe, affordable housing.

Maryland's Department of Housing and Community Development published its Housing Needs Assessment in 2020. The report noted a worsening shortage of affordable and available housing, particularly for "extremely low-income households" that earn 30% or less than the area median income (AMI). At that point in time, for every 100 households at or below this threshold, there were only 33 homes available.<sup>1</sup>

But the situation has only gotten worse since 2020. Moody's Analytics recently reported that the United States is now "rent-burdened" nationwide for the first time. This means the average ratio of rent to household income has risen above 30%. Households are increasingly priced out of homeownership and nationwide multifamily vacancy rates remain steady, driving housing costs to unprecedented highs. In the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2022, the national average for monthly rent payments rose above \$1,700 per unit for the first time, 20.6% higher than the pre-pandemic average.<sup>2 3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Documents/Other%20Publications/Report.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://cre.moodyanalytics.com/insights/market-insights/q4-2022-housing-affordability-update/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://cre.moodyanalytics.com/insights/cre-trends/q4-2022-preliminary-trend-announcement/>

This affordability crisis is driving evictions and displacing families. It leads households to settle for inadequate housing without enough space for the number of people living in a home. It also causes renters to live in unsafe condition when there isn't habitable and affordable housing available.

This crisis is complex and demands a multifaceted response. Senate Bill 315 provides one such solution. If enacted, SB 315 will provide funding to expand Maryland's affordable housing stock in innovative ways. New affordable housing must be developed to close the current gap in availability and prepare for increasing need in years to come.

For all these reasons, we support SB 315 and respectfully urge a favorable report.

Best,  
Michael Donnelly  
Tenant Advocacy Coordinator  
Economic Action Maryland  
2209 Maryland Ave, Baltimore, MD 21218

**MD Catholic Conference\_FAV\_SB0315.pdf**

Uploaded by: MJ Kraska

Position: FAV



**February 14, 2023**

**SB 315**

**Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund - Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)**

**Senate Education, Energy, & Environment Committee**

**Position: Support**

The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Senate Bill 315 establishes the Housing Innovation Pilot Program in the Department of Housing and Community Development to provide funds for certain mixed-income, cross-subsidized housing and to create opportunities to increase the volume of housing production and establishes the Housing Innovation Fund as a special, non-lapsing fund to be used only to provide low- or no-interest loans to local housing authorities.

The Catholic bishops believe decent, safe, and affordable housing is a human right. Catholic teaching supports the right to private property but recognizes that communities and the government have an obligation to ensure the housing needs of all are met, especially poor and vulnerable people and their families. In a time of rising homelessness and when many workers' wages are stagnant and living expenses are rising, it is important to ensure housing security for our most vulnerable populations.

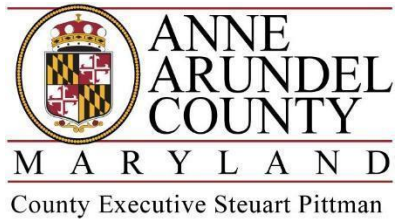
The Conference appreciates your consideration and respectfully urges a **favorable** report for Senate Bill 315.



**Anne Arundel County \_FAV\_SB315.pdf**

Uploaded by: Peter Baron

Position: FAV



February 14, 2023

**Senate Bill 315**

**Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund -  
Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)**

**Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 315 – Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund - Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023).

This Bill would create a Housing Innovation Pilot Program to work with local housing authorities to increase the production of housing and to provide matching funds from the Housing Innovation Fund that the Bill establishes.

Senate Bill 315 will provide public housing authorities with much needed resources. In Anne Arundel County, it will create state loan opportunities for the Housing Authority of the City of Annapolis (HACA) and the Housing Commission of Anne Arundel County (HCAAC) to build new affordable housing by leveraging existing funds for state matching funds. Given the high demand for affordable housing in Anne Arundel County from both residents and employers, this program will be a valuable tool in assisting our housing authorities meet that demand.

For all of these reasons, Anne Arundel County respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** report on Senate Bill 315.

# **SB 315 Housing Innovation Pilot Program - Testimon**

Uploaded by: Therese Hessler

Position: FAV



*Gaithersburg*  
A CHARACTER COUNTS! CITY

**Bill: SB315 - Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund - Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)**

Senate Education, Energy, & Environment Committee

February 14, 2023 – 1:00 PM

**Position: Support**

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

The City of Gaithersburg writes to support **SB315 - Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund - Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)**. If enacted, this legislation would establish a Housing Innovation Pilot Program in the Department of Housing and Community Development to provide funds for certain mixed-income, cross-subsidized housing and to create opportunities to increase the volume of housing production. This would establish the Housing Innovation Fund as a special, non-lapsing fund to be used only to provide low- or no-interest loans to local housing authorities.

According to the University of Maryland's National Center for Smart Growth and Enterprise Community Partners, a nonprofit housing lender and advocacy organization, Maryland must add thousands more housing units by 2030 to accommodate a swelling population of low-income residents, while also meeting unmet demand from moderate-income residents, seniors and people with disabilities. As of 2021, the state was in need of an additional 85,000 rental units for low-income households. Unfortunately, this shortage will continue to exacerbate unless the state creates and preserves more affordable homes.

Expanding funding opportunities to Housing Commissions across the state, such as the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County, will undoubtedly help our communities to better respond to the need for affordable housing. If passed, this legislation would allow for dollar-for-dollar matches for loans under this program through housing innovation projects, empowering local governments to take the steps necessary to ensure their residents have access to affordable housing and a higher quality of life. Therefore, we respectfully request a favorable report on SB315.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 301-466-5350 or our government relations consultant, Therese Hessler, at [therese@ashlargr.com](mailto:therese@ashlargr.com). We appreciate your support.

Respectfully submitted,

Jud Ashman  
Mayor

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MAYOR  
Jud Ashman

COUNCIL MEMBERS  
Neil Harris  
Lisa Henderson  
Jim McNulty  
Ryan Spiegel  
Robert Wu

CITY MANAGER  
Tanisha R. Briley

**SB315\_MDSierraClub\_fwa 14Feb2023.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brian Ditzler

Position: FWA



P.O. Box 278  
Riverdale, MD 20738

**Committee:** Education, Energy, and the Environment  
**Testimony on:** SB315 – “Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund – Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)”  
**Position:** Support with Amendments  
**Hearing Date:** February 14, 2023

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club strongly supports SB315 and believes the bill would be improved with two amendments. The bill would create a Housing Innovation Fund that would provide low or no-interest loans for local housing authorities to develop mixed-income, cross-subsidized housing to address the large shortage of rental units for low-income families that is expected to get even worse over the next decade. With rents continuing to rise, the state will see many more families facing housing insecurity and potentially homelessness unless much more housing assistance is provided and the volume of housing production greatly increases.

SB315 would create a five-year pilot program to provide matching funds for housing innovation projects in which at least 20% of units are set aside for residents with a household income of not more than 50% of the area median income (AMI), and at least 40% of units are for residents with a household income of not more than 60% of the AMI.

We propose amendments which would specify two additional requirements for housing innovation projects to qualify for funding. First, the new housing must be built in walkable and bikeable areas with easy access to buses and ideally trains. Many lower-income residents don't even own a car and rely on transit. Walking and biking are healthy modes of travel, or residents could use transit to get to jobs, schools, shopping and services. Use of public transit and reduced reliance on cars would help Maryland meet its rigorous climate goals, reduce health-damaging emissions from vehicles, and thereby improve local air quality.

The second amendment to the requirements for housing innovation projects to qualify for funding would specify that new mixed-income, cross-subsidized housing be built that is environmentally sustainable. The housing should include solar panels or green roofs, windows that are at least double pane, good insulation, and energy-efficient electric heating and appliances, all of which would save money for income-burdened individuals while helping the environment. Having native trees and vegetation in green spaces incorporated into the design of new housing areas would reduce heat islands and make life more pleasant as well as being good for the environment. Such amenities should not be exclusive to affluent communities.

This bill would help Maryland to meet its equity and environmental objectives, and with our amendments, deserves passage. We urge this committee to issue a favorable report on it.

Ethan Goffman  
Transportation Committee  
[Goffmane@yahoo.com](mailto:Goffmane@yahoo.com)

Brian Ditzler  
Transportation Chair  
[Brian.Ditzler@MDSierra.org](mailto:Brian.Ditzler@MDSierra.org)

Josh Tulkin  
Chapter Director  
[Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org](mailto:Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org)

Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America's oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 70,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.

**BaltimoreCounty\_FWA\_SB0315.pdf**

Uploaded by: Joshua Greenberg

Position: FWA



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.  
*County Executive*

JENNIFER AIOSA  
*Director of Government Affairs*

AMANDA KONTZ CARR  
*Legislative Officer*

JOSHUA M. GREENBERG  
*Associate Director of Government Affairs*

**BILL NO.: SB 315**

**TITLE:** Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund - Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)

**SPONSOR:** Senator Waldstreicher

**COMMITTEE:** Education, Energy, and the Environment

**POSITION:** **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

**DATE:** February 14, 2023

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS WITH AMENDMENTS** Senate Bill 315 – Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund - Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023). This legislation would establish the Housing Innovation Pilot Program in the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Housing Innovation Fund to provide low-or no-interest loans to local housing authorities.

This year, Baltimore County Executive John Olszewski announced a package of reforms aimed at tackling the scourge of housing insecurity in Baltimore County. Since taking office, County Executive Olszewski passed the HOME Act, created the Baltimore County Department of Housing and Community Development, and accelerated programming to increase the local stock of attainable housing for struggling residents. Baltimore County applauds Senate Bill 315 in spirit for providing the critically needed funds to develop mixed-income, cross-subsidized housing; however, currently, Baltimore County’s housing efforts would not benefit from this bill.

Baltimore County feels this bill could be made stronger with several key amendments:

- Allow funds to be provided to other local agencies and for projects led by non-profit and for-profit developers.
- Strike provisions that apply the bill solely to publically-owned projects.



- Remove prioritization for projects that do not use low-income housing tax credit equity or tax-exempt volume cap.

Local Housing authorities across the State of Maryland are working tirelessly to ensure every single family has a place to call home. Baltimore County thanks the sponsor for introducing this important legislation, and respectfully requests amendments that would assist the County in its mission.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on Senate Bill 315. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at [jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov).

**MAHC Testimony\_SB 315\_PHA Innovation Pilot\_FAV W A**

Uploaded by: Miranda Willems

Position: FWA



**Testimony to the Senate Education, Environment & Environment Committee**  
**SB 315 – Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023**  
**Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**  
**February 10, 2023**

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SB 315 would create a Housing Innovation Pilot Program to provide matching low and no interest loan funds to Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) to develop qualified mixed income housing projects. The program would give priority to PHAs that are developing affordable housing projects that do not use Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) or Tax-Exempt bonds. Additional funding, as proposed by this bill, is needed to develop affordable housing and to support our PHA's development projects so they can adequately meet the needs of limited income residents, and many PHA's around the state are engaging in the development of affordable housing projects outside of the traditional public and assisted housing models. However, it is our understanding that only the PHA in Montgomery County – the Housing Opportunities Commission – currently has the capacity to develop such eligible housing without relying on LIHTC or Tax-Exempt bond financing. The LIHTC is the primary financing tool used to build new affordable housing across the country, so we feel the priority for funding established in the bill would be too limiting and restrict the ability for all other housing authorities across the State from accessing the funds.

Many of the State's largest PHAs are participating in HUD's Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Program and investing in major renovations or redevelopment of their aging public housing portfolios, all of which have used the LIHTC and/or Tax-Exempt bond funds as a primary source of financing. This new Pilot Program should be used to allow the State to invest in additional publicly owned affordable housing projects and continue the redevelopment and modernization of the State's remaining aging public housing stock, which could be done if the clause giving preference to non-LIHTC and Tax-Exempt Bond projects was removed.

We support SB 315 if amended to remove the preference for funding non-Low Income Housing Tax Credit and Tax Exempt Bond projects to allow other PHAs the ability to use the funding.

MAHC is the leading organization for the affordable rental housing industry in Maryland and represents over 185 member organizations, including nonprofit and for-profit developers, State and local housing authorities, property management companies, financial institutions, community development organizations, contractors, tax credit investors, consultants and individuals. Our members include several Housing Authorities who could benefit from SB 315 if amended.

**Respectfully submitted on February 10, 2023 by Miranda Darden-Willems, Executive Director, on behalf of the MAHC Board of Directors.**



**MAHC Board of Directors**

Christine Madigan, Enterprise Community Development, President

Tom Ayd, Green Street Housing, Vice President

Catherine Stokes, Homes for America, Secretary

Miles Perkins, AGM Financial, Treasurer

Marsha Blunt, Pennrose Property Management

Mike Cumming, CohnReznick, Chief Financial Officer

Mary Claire Davis, AHC Greater Baltimore

Ivy Dench-Carter, Pennrose Properties, Advisor Emeritus

Maryann Dillon, Housing Initiative Partnership

Nichole Doye Battle, GEDCO

Peter Engel, Howard County Housing Commission

Mike Font, New Harbor Development

Chickie Grayson, Retired, Advisor Emeritus

Dana Johnson, Homes for America

Brian Lopez, Osprey Property Company

Dan McCarthy, Episcopal Housing

Willy Moore, Southway Builders

David Raderman, Gallagher, Evelius & Jones, Of Counsel

Jessica D. Zuniga, Foundation Development Group, Ex Officio

**SB 315 HABC testimony 2 14 23\_Signed.pdf**

Uploaded by: Trevlyn Johnson

Position: FWA

Robin Carter  
Chairperson, Board of Commissioners

Janet Abrahams  
President | Chief Executive Officer



## SB 315

February 14, 2023

**TO:** Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

**FROM:** Janet Abrahams, HABC President & CEO

**RE:** Senate Bill 315 - Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund - Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)

**POSITION: Support**

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that while the Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) is always supportive of additional funding programs that serve to preserve and increase the number of quality affordable housing opportunities, we believe that SB 315 would not be readily applicable to Baltimore City's affordable housing development due to our housing economics.

Affordable housing developments in Baltimore City require use of a greater level of deeply affordable subsidies, such as LIHTCs; tax-exempt bonds, and the gap funding that is tied to these programs. These funds are not prioritized in and are excluded from this proposed program. It appears that it is structured so it would be more advantageous to other areas of the State, other than Baltimore City, where there are stronger household incomes and overall housing market conditions.

While we understand that SB 315 will establish a pilot program to provide state matching funds for housing innovation projects funded through local revolving loans for particular mixed-income and cross-subsidized housing, it again prioritizes projects that do not utilize low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC) and tax-exempt bonds. As long as the proposed fund, does not have the effect of cutting current or diluting future funding available for existing State housing funding programs, we are in support of it.

HABC is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest public housing authority in the country, serving over 42,000 of Baltimore City's low-income individuals through its Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher programs. HABC's public housing inventory currently consists of just over 6,000 units located at various developments and scattered sites throughout the city. Historically in Baltimore, public housing sites were built in segregated areas of the city with high concentrations of poverty and neighborhood disinvestment. Generally, in these neighborhoods there was and continues to be limited access to quality schools, green

Housing Authority of Baltimore City | 417 East Fayette Street, Baltimore, MD 21202

410.396.3232 www.HABC.org @BmoreHabc

space/recreation areas, grocery stores, healthcare facilities, financial institutions, transportation, etc. These areas also have high rates of unemployment and crime, high concentration of poverty and minority populations, and lower life-expectancy rates than in more affluent areas of the City. Through the years, decreases and uncertainty in federal funding for public housing programs, has resulted in deferred maintenance and the deterioration of many public housing developments. This made it necessary to use innovative partnership and funding mechanisms to preserve affordable housing.

Since 2015, HABC has been converting a portion of its public housing to private ownership under HUD's Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD). HABC has partnered with private developers and the State Housing Finance Agency to realize over \$934 million in investment for its current RAD projects, allowing for extensive renovations and significant capital improvements at the properties, representing the preservation of over 5,600 deeply affordable housing units. HABC is also working to transform its public housing into thriving mixed-income communities where residents have opportunities for economic mobility. Three of our current major redevelopment initiatives include the Perkins Somerset Oldtown (PSO) Transformation Plan, Transform Poe and the O'Donnell Heights Neighborhood Revitalization Plan.

The PSO Transformation Plan includes the demolition and redevelopment of Perkins Homes in East Baltimore into a vibrant mixed income community with affordable and market rate housing as well as other amenities and supportive services for residents. The housing plan includes the new construction of 629 public housing replacement units, 424 low-income units serving households with an average of 60% AMI and 307 unrestricted market rate units spread across the Somerset and Perkins sites. Working with the City of Baltimore's, private developers and other partners, the PSO Plan will bring over \$1 billion in investment to this area of the city.

The Transform Poe Plan seeks to redevelop Poe Homes, which sits on seven acres in West Baltimore and consists of 288 obsolete public housing units. The O'Donnell Heights Neighborhood Revitalization Plan includes the redevelopment of the original 900 public housing units at the site with 924 newly constructed residential units. All of these redevelopment efforts, including the RAD projects, rely heavily on private investment and tax credits to make implementation possible.

HABC is currently exploring options to reposition or redevelop several of our other public housing sites, but funding and feasibility make this challenging. We estimate that the 10 sites/4,561 units that remain in our housing stock (including Poe Homes and O'Donnell Heights) have immediate capital needs in the amount of approximately \$121.4 million and 20-year capital needs in the amount of over \$575.8 million. The projected cost to redevelop these sites on a scale similar to the PSO Transformation is over \$2 billion. In addition, there are several sites that were redeveloped under HUD's HOPE VI program, for which the affordability period has expired. To preserve this affordability at five of these sites, consisting of 457 units, HABC exercised its right of first refusal and brought them back into our inventory.

As HABC continues to seek funding and resources to support these efforts we are concerned that the dollar-for-dollar match would create a challenge to accessing these funds. Again, the requirement that this funding is not prioritized for projects that receive tax credits and tax-exempt bonds could present a challenge to HABC. Since HABC's current project pipeline, in addition to the many other redevelopment initiatives that take place throughout Baltimore City and the State of Maryland, rely on tax credits for their funding, it is critical that the Housing Innovation Program is not funded from existing State programs that are necessary for projects that use tax credits.

We respectfully request a **favorable with amendments that address concerns raised herein** on Senate Bill 315.

**Respectfully submitted:**



**Janet Abrahams, HABC President & CEO**

Housing Authority of Baltimore City | 417 East Fayette Street, Baltimore, MD 21202

 410.396.3232  [www.HABC.org](http://www.HABC.org)    @BmoreHabc 



**SB 315\_Prince George's County Council\_LOI.pdf**

Uploaded by: Rachel Clark

Position: INFO



# THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

(301) 952-3700  
County Council

## POSITION STATEMENT

**SB 315**  
Senator Waldstreicher

Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing  
Innovation Fund – Establishment (Housing Innovation  
Pilot Program Act of 2023)

## POSITION:

## LETTER OF INQUIRY

**SB 315** – Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund – Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023) – For the purpose of establishing the Housing Innovation Pilot Program and the Housing Innovation Fund in the Department of Housing and Community Development to provide loans for local housing authorities to develop mixed-income, cross-subsidized housing. This bill would take effect July 1, 2023 and remain in effect for five years, unless the General Assembly decides to extend the Program.

This bill would establish the Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Fund with the purpose of incentivizing the State's public housing authorities to increase the volume of housing production by providing state matching funds when certain requirements are met. Local authorities would be required to provide dollar-for-dollar matching funds awarded to housing innovation projects.

Affordable housing is a crisis in the United States, in Maryland, and in Prince George's County. We steadfastly support any legislation aimed at increasing affordable housing. However, we have some concerns with the funding formula required in this bill. A dollar-for-dollar match is not the most equitable method because each county in this State is not on equal footing when it comes to its budget. Some counties have significantly larger coffers than others, so by setting up the formula as a dollar-for-dollar match, you are giving unfair advantage right at the outset to some counties over others. We would implore the Committee to review this legislation and see that another type of funding formula, one that promotes fairness, be utilized when establishing this pilot program.

The Prince George's County Council appreciates the Committee's time and consideration on this important issue.

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Prepared by: Evans & Associates  
On behalf of Prince George's County Council