



## 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**

---

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