



## Maryland Municipal League

*The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns*

# TESTIMONY

February 7, 2023

**Committee:** Environment & Transportation

**Bill:** HB 239 – Accessory Dwelling Unit Promotion and Policy Task Force

**Position:** \_\_\_\_Support with amendments

**Reason for Position:**

The Maryland Municipal League generally supports HB 239, which creates a task force to study Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in Maryland. Maryland is experiencing a housing crisis which can only be alleviated with a comprehensive and well-researched approach, and we applaud the Sponsors' intent.

However, the requirements for the Task Force are overly proscriptive. The role of a Task Force is to be an unbiased reviewer: to examine the current situation, research potential solutions, and recommend best practices for implementing them while recognizing drawbacks and accounting for tradeoffs. The bill as drafted seems to force the Task Force's findings to support a statewide ADU mandate. This is not an unbiased approach and could be counterproductive in our collective battle against housing insecurity.

Maryland's local governments have traditionally maintained their own authority over planning and zoning decisions. Local government leaders are the most familiar with the needs of their residents, the culture of their communities, and the limits of their land and infrastructure. The needs of our rural communities can vary greatly from those of our urban communities, for example. Maryland's 157 municipalities are simply too diverse for a one-size-fits-all approach. Any study of housing solutions must consider all the dynamics at play.

For these reasons, we respectfully request 2 amendments: first, to expand the Task Force to include one MML representative from an urban area, and one MML representative from a rural area. The second would broaden the scope of the Task Force to ensure its goal is the implementation of well-researched best practices for ADUs, rather than forced statewide zoning.

1212 West Street, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

410-268-5514 | 800-492-7121 | FAX: 410-268-7004 | [www.mdmunicipal.org](http://www.mdmunicipal.org)

We appreciate the Sponsor's openness to these amendments and look forward to continuing to work together. With these amendments, the League would respectfully request that this committee provide HB 239 with a favorable report.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Theresa Kuhns

Chief Executive Officer

Angelica Bailey Thupari, Esq.

Director, Advocacy & Public Affairs

Bill Jorch

Director, Public Policy

Justin Fiore

Manager, Government Relations