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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.