



**HB079**  
**Housing and Community Development –**  
**Whole-Home Repairs Act of 2023**  
**Testimony before Environment and Transportation Committee**  
**Hearing January 31, 2023**  
**Position: Favorable**

Dear Chair and Committee members:

My name is Elizabeth Fixsen, and I represent the 700+ members of Indivisible Howard County, an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today in support of HB079, to provide grants to local agencies for repairs to owner-occupied homes and small landlord rentals units to ensure their habitability.

HB079 will provide a key tool to address the Maryland Commission on Climate Change’s recommendation to “retrofit 100% of low-income households by 2030.” A focus on low-income households is critical, because these households currently have a disproportionately high energy burden which will only increase as gas rates rise.

This bill will fill the gap in various state and federal programs that fund repairs for habitability, including weatherization, health and safety repairs and energy efficiency upgrades. Maryland has no wholistic approach to covering all the repair needs of a property, especially for habitability concerns (e.g., roof repair, water leaks, or other structural issues). These deficiencies must be addressed before a property can be weatherized or benefit from energy efficiency or other upgrades such as solar panels.

The bill will create a Whole-Home Repairs Program (Program) within the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to provide these grants. Additionally, the bill will create a Whole-Home Repairs Fund (Fund) to support the grant program, improve coordination across home repair programs, and increase retention in workforce development programs. The Fund will consist of appropriated state dollars, federal funds, and other funds for the benefit of the Program.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

**We respectfully urge a favorable report.**

Elizabeth Fixsen  
Savage, MD