



## Maryland Municipal League

*The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns*

# TESTIMONY

February 16, 2023

**Committee:** Judicial Proceedings

**Bill:** SB 335 – Real Property - Unlawfully Restrictive Covenants - Modification by Municipalities

**Position:** \_\_\_ Support

**Reason for Position:**

The Maryland Municipal League supports SB 335, which would enable a municipality to remove racially restrictive covenants from deeds recorded within its jurisdiction, provided sufficient notice has been given to the property owner.

Racially restrictive covenants are unconstitutional and unenforceable (see the 1968 Fair Housing Act and *Shelley v. Kraemer*, 334 U.S. 1 (1948)), but remain in publicly accessible documents, incorrectly implying that valuable members of our communities are unsafe and unwelcome. This offensive messaging is hurtful to our residents, contradicts our members' core values, and dilutes the strength of our communities. Allowing racially restrictive covenants to remain when they could be fairly and expeditiously removed is unconscionable.

For these reasons, the League respectfully requests that this committee provide SB 335 with a favorable report.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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