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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**SPONSOR STATEMENT**

**Senate Bill 335 – Real Property – Unlawfully Restrictive Covenants – Modification  
by Municipalities**

February 16, 2023

Mister Chairman and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

During the 2004 legislative session, the General Assembly passed legislation which allowed Homeowners Associations to carry out a bulk removal of restrictive covenants. Similar to that 2004 bill, Senate Bill 335 is enabling legislation which will allow municipalities to remove en masse, these unlawful restrictions that are largely based on race, religious belief, and national origin.

The covenants, which are unconstitutional and unenforceable, continue to live indefinitely within the deed of older properties in our state. Under this bill, municipalities who find these restrictive covenants can choose to remove them in bulk once they provide adequate notice to homeowners at least 30 days prior to removal. The bill does allow homeowners the option to decline such action.

As a state and a country, we have declared it unlawful to have such discriminatory restrictions on the ownership of property, and we need to make it as easy as possible to remedy these covenants. And so, I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 335.