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Baltimore County Senate Delegation



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony for Senate Bill 953
Housing–Community Development–Funding
February 28, 2024

Good afternoon Chair Guzzone, and members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

I stand before you fully in support of Senate Bill 953 (“SB 953”), which allocates money to the Community and Development Program Fund in the hopes of revitalizing Maryland communities.

Under current law, funds collected from the disposition of abandoned property must be distributed by the Comptroller to Maryland Legal Services Corporation.¹ This legislation requires the funds to be distributed by the Comptroller include an annual allocation of \$5,000,000 to the state’s Community Development and Program Fund (“the Fund”) in addition to Maryland Legal Services Corporation.

The purpose of the Fund is to provide financial assistance for statewide community development projects and community development organizations.² The fund provides “financial assistance, including capital and operating grants, to community development projects and community development organizations to provide and support: (1) affordable housing; (2) neighborhood revitalization for residential and commercial areas; (3) housing counseling, financial counseling, and foreclosure prevention; (4) community organizing; (5) small business development; (6) community services; and (7) any other community development purpose.”³

Governor Moore’s administration has made affordable housing initiatives top priority,⁴ thus, SB 953 compliments the Governor’s initiatives. SB 953 will encourage opportunities for affordable housing and invest in communities that have been left behind. As such, I respectfully request a favorable report for SB 953.

¹ Md. Code Housing and Development Article § 17-317.

² Md. Code. Housing and Community Development § 6-606(b).

³ *Id.* at § 6-607.

⁴ See The Housing Expansion and Affordability Act, SB 482 / House Bill 538; and The Housing and Community Development Financing Act SB 483 / House Bill 599.