



February 21, 2024

Position: SUPPORT

SB 483 - Maryland Community Investment Corporation - Establishment (Housing and Community Development Financing Act of 2024)

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

Honorable members of the legislative body,

I write to you today on behalf of Maryland Latinos Unidos (MLU), a coalition of organizations, businesses, and individuals dedicated to supporting Latino and immigrant communities across our great state. Our mission is simple yet profound: to address the disparities and inequities faced by our Latino and immigrant brothers and sisters and to work tirelessly towards solutions through coordinated action.

It is imperative that we recognize the pressing need for equitable policies that uplift and empower marginalized communities. The Latino population in Maryland continues to grow, yet far too often, our communities face barriers to accessing essential services such as housing, healthcare, education, and economic opportunities.

Our proposed bill seeks to address these systemic challenges head-on. By championing equity and justice, we can harness the collective strength of our community to advocate for meaningful change. This bill encompasses a multifaceted approach, focusing on key areas of public policy, advocacy, convening, connecting, organizing, and capacity building.

First and foremost, our bill aims to track legislation and executive actions that impact Latino and immigrant communities, ensuring that their voices are heard and their needs are addressed at every level of government. We will advocate for social, economic, health, and environmental justice, promoting language access and fostering positive relations with law enforcement.

Furthermore, our bill emphasizes the importance of convening, connecting, and organizing efforts to address the specific concerns of Latino and immigrant communities, including housing insecurity, food insecurity, educational access, and economic opportunities. By amplifying

existing initiatives and scaling them up to statewide efforts, we can make tangible progress towards a more equitable future for all Marylanders.

Lastly, our bill prioritizes capacity building within Latino-serving nonprofits, providing them with the resources and support they need to effectively serve their communities. From technical assistance to grant writing to advocacy training, we are committed to empowering organizations to make a lasting impact.

In conclusion, I urge you to support this bill not just for the benefit of Maryland's Latino and immigrant communities, but for the betterment of our entire state. By working together in solidarity, we can build a more just and equitable Maryland for generations to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Together, we can make a difference. Muchas gracias.

Respectfully,
Carlos Orbe, Jr.
Communications and Public Affairs Specialist
Maryland Latinos Unidos