



Testimony Supporting **HB007**

**Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**

January 24, 2024

Position: SUPPORT

Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund - Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2024)

My name is Carlos Orbe, Jr., and I am the Communications and Public Affairs Specialist for Maryland Latinos Unidos (MLU). I am writing on behalf of Maryland Latinos Unidos (MLU), a statewide network dedicated to supporting and advocating for Latino and immigrant communities in Maryland. As an organization deeply committed to the welfare and empowerment of these communities, we wanted to express our strong support for the "HB07 Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund - Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2024)" currently under consideration.

At Maryland Latinos Unidos, our mission revolves around addressing the disparities and inequities that our Latino and immigrant communities often face. We firmly believe that the proposed "HB07 Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund" aligns with our core values and objectives. By championing this legislation, which establishes the Housing Innovation Pilot Program and the Housing Innovation Fund within the Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland demonstrates a commitment to tackling the pressing housing issues that disproportionately affect Latinos and immigrants in our state.

The objectives outlined in "HB07 Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund," such as increasing housing production, encouraging innovation in housing projects, and providing state matching funds for local initiatives, strongly resonate with our mission. We recognize that housing affordability and accessibility are critical concerns for many Latino and immigrant families in Maryland. Therefore, we believe that this legislation has the potential to make a substantial positive impact on the lives of our community members.

Furthermore, we appreciate the attention given to the fiscal aspects of this bill, as well as its potential to stimulate local economies and support small businesses involved in housing development and construction.

Maryland Latinos Unidos is dedicated to building the capacity of grassroots Hispanic-serving organizations and ensuring that all Latinos have access to essential services. We believe that "HB07 Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund" can contribute significantly to achieving these objectives.

In conclusion, we urge you to consider our strong support for "HB07 Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund." It represents a vital step towards addressing housing disparities and promoting equity in our state. We would be honored to collaborate further and provide any assistance or insights that might be helpful in advancing this legislation.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. We look forward to continued partnership and the opportunity to create a brighter future for Maryland's Latino and immigrant communities.

Sincerely,  
Carlos Orbe, Jr.  
Communications and Public Affairs Specialist  
Maryland Latinos Unidos (MLU)