



February 6, 2024

Environment and Transportation Committee  
House Office Building  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairman Korman and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

We write in support of HB 131, Housing Development Permit Applications - Local Reporting Requirements. Prosperity Now is a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C. that works to expand economic opportunity for all Americans by promoting and advocating for asset-building policies and programs.

Maryland faces an existential housing crisis. HB 131 can make a real difference in aiding state and local policymakers develop effective tools to approve new housing. HB 131 should lead to streamlined permitting processes in all Maryland jurisdictions. If enacted, this bill will require information that large jurisdictions, such as Montgomery County, where I live, appear to have trouble identifying, which is unacceptable. The annual data will inform state policy and local action, as we learn about the impediments to new housing.

Maryland's economic growth has lagged the nation's and those of neighboring states. A January report from Comptroller Lierman's office underscores that the lack of housing is a major reason. It notes that between 2019 and 2022, the housing inventory dropped statewide by about 57% (though worse in some counties), while median home prices increased 27%.

According to our own analyses, 50% of Maryland renters are cost burdened, meaning they spend more than 30% of their incomes on housing. Twenty-seven percent of homeowners in the state are cost burdened. Such burdens can devastate a family with a minor disruption.

We strongly support HB 131 a start to addressing Maryland's housing crisis. I can be reached at [dryan@prosperitynow.org](mailto:dryan@prosperitynow.org) or at 202-207-0155.

Sincerely,

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Prosperity Now

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