



## **POSITION STATEMENT**

**Bill:** HB 0241 Housing and Community Development – Just Community Designation

**Position:** Support

**Date:** January 30, 2024

**Contact:** Debra Borden, General Counsel

Jordan Baucum Colbert, Government Affairs Liaison

Dear Chair Marc Korman and Vice Chair Regina T. Boyce,

The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC or “the Commission”) has voted to support this bill. The Commission respectfully requests that the Environment and Transportation Committee consider this information and include it in the record.

**What this Bill Does.** This bill authorizes the Governor, on the recommendation of the Secretary of Housing and Community Development, to designate certain areas as Just Communities based on certain criteria; and providing for the prioritization of State funding for Just Communities to increase racial, economic, and healthy equity in the State.

**Committed to Equitable Land Use Planning and Zoning.** The Commission strongly supports the goal of this bill – to use an equity lens on our priority funding areas. These would be equity areas that have been identified for special funding so that they can address historic disinvestment and disenfranchisement of various communities.

The Commission is committed to equitable land use planning and zoning and for systematically dismantling the institutional and structural racism that exists in and has long influenced planning and zoning processes. We are committed to confronting the legacy of racism and its ongoing effects and to using this equity lens in all of our plans, policies, practices and other work.

As the American Planning Association states, “Planning for Equity means applying an equity lens—for just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their

full potential—to everything planners do. From the way planners work with community members creating a shared vision for their neighborhoods to advocating for policies that connect people to opportunities at the local, state, and federal levels, planning for equity is planning for all.”

For these reasons, the Commission requests an affirmative vote in support of HB0241.