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DEPUTY MINORITY WHIP

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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1187

RESERVE FUNDING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

HB1187 impacts all citizens in the State of Maryland, whether directly or indirectly. As you know, many of our retirees, disabled and elderly have chosen to downsize and buy into a condominium in a common ownership community. These communities, as indicated, share common areas that like the condos themselves require maintenance and upkeep. HB107, passed in 2022, requires common ownership communities to complete evaluations of building structural components to project costs for repairs and upgrades to be met by payments into reserve funds within a three-year period.

Time has not been kind to many of our condominiums serving the needs of our retirees, seniors and disabled given the exorbitant increases in condo fees required by community associations to meet the mandates set forth by HB107 as passed. Buildings degrade, equipment wears out, and weather-related repairs continue to be a draw on the funds set aside for these repairs. To compound the problem, inflation has increased the costs of gasoline, groceries, and medications. These economic changes are especially hard on our compromised and aging citizenry. Some may be forced out of their homes and into the homes of relatives and friends. Autonomy lost in such a way is disheartening to say the least. Depression is the enemy of all members of our society.

Currently there are bills proposed to ameliorate the situation. One proposes to extend the three-year deadline to five years. But the increases in condominium fees for many have more than doubled since 2022. These increases cannot be met by our most sensitive population. Something must be done.

HB1187 proposes the establishment of the Reserve Fund Assistance Program that, upon application by those 62 years old or older, disabled or unable to work due to injury or medical condition, or a compromised by a defined disability, may seek relief from the proposed program to be funded by 2026.

Much thought and many interviews went into the proposal of this bill in hopes of providing a safety net for our most challenged and deserving Marylanders.

Please enter a Favorable Report for HB1187.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan X. McComas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and a distinct 'X'.