



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB0093

Housing and Community Development - Homeless Shelter Certification Program Environment and Transportation Committee

FAVORABLE

TO: Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Heather East, Chase Home, Inc. and Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network

DATE: January 31, 2025

The Chase Home, Inc. and Episcopal Church supports House Bill 0093 to establish certification for homeless shelters in the State of Maryland under the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Under this Bill, DHCD will set standards for the state's homeless shelters to protect the vulnerable homeless population.

We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 0093 to establish a Homeless Shelter Certification Program.

The Chase Home, Inc. is pleased to offer a favorable testimony in strong support of the HB0093. As a Board member of the Anne Arundel and Annapolis Coalition to End Homelessness, with membership of over 50 County and City of Annapolis agencies and individuals to include Anne Arundel County Homeless Shelters and homeless service providers, non-profit organizations serving special needs clients, and others who play critical roles in ending homelessness in the County, I advocate to ensure the needs of persons who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness within the County are being met. Moreover, serving on the Committee that oversees the distribution of Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Grant Funds awarded to organizations, I am aware of the strict regulations with which these organizations need to operate to receive HUD funds. This ensures a reputable non-profit shelter. Private shelters who don't seek Federal or State funds would benefit from a certification process and oversight by the Department of Housing and Community Development to ensure a reputable shelter program and that the needs of the homeless they serve are met. We strongly support the Homeless Shelter Certification Act.

For the reasons noted above, we urge a FAVORABLE report on HB 0093.