



Ella Ennis, Legislative Chairman
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The Honorable Marc Korman, Chairman
and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Annapolis, Maryland

Re: **SB0266** – Local Comprehensive Planning and State Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Policy – Planning Principles – **UNFAVORABLE**

Dear Chairman Korman and Committee Members,

The Maryland Federation of Republican Women is concerned that the **planning principles** in SB0266 **are designed for a densely populated urban environment** and not suitable for exurban communities or rural counties. **Maryland is a mosaic of community choices** – urban, metropolitan, dense suburban, exurban, rural agricultural, rural mountain -- each with its own unique geography, infrastructure needs, and citizen preferences.

However, the planning principles in this bill appear to limit planning to two options -- intense development or no development.

- Equity: “Underserved populations” is extremely broad terminology – socioeconomic, geographic, racial/ethnic, language, disability, etc.
- Place: Requires community participation and consideration, conceivably so that planning within the jurisdictions can reflect the needs and desires of its citizens but none of the planning principles address an individual’s personal desires to live and work where they choose.
- Housing: A “mix of quality housing types” could be used to override local zoning laws to increase density (e.g. auxiliary housing units in single-family zones). Who determines “quality”?
- Land: Prioritizing development within population centers does not accommodate a labor force needed for “working landscapes”.

SB0266 places too much emphasis on State control of development to the detriment of Local Comprehensive Planning.

Please vote an **UNFAVORABLE** report for **SB0266**.

Sincerely,
Ella Ennis, Legislative Chairman