



Testimony HB 235
House Economic Matters Committee
February 12, 2026
Position: FAVORABLE

Chair Valderamma and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

The Community Development Network of Maryland (CDN) is the voice for Maryland’s community development sector and serves nearly 200 member organizations. CDN—focuses on nonprofit housing developers, housing counseling agencies, and community-based revitalization across Maryland. The mission of CDN is to promote, strengthen and advocate for the community development sector throughout Maryland’s urban, suburban and rural communities.

HB 235 -Neighborhood BusinessWorks (NBW) loan program offers financing to new or expanding small businesses and nonprofit organizations. Funding is available for projects located in Priority Funding Areas. This bill removes the requirement for local approval.

Local approval is an added barrier to small businesses and non- profit participation in the NBW program.

According to the Maryland Chamber of Commerce, Maryland ranks 42nd for economic outlook and 41st for recent performance. These aren’t just numbers — they reflect a reality that affects jobs, families, and the state’s ability to fund essential services. Sluggish job growth, outbound migration, and budget shortfalls show that Maryland is at a pivotal moment. If we want a stronger future, we must prioritize an economy that supports business investment, expansion, and long-term growth.

We urge a favorable report for HB 235.

Submitted by Claudia Wilson Randall, Executive Director, Community Development Network of Maryland