



House Bill 691 - State Government - Procedures - Permitting Efficiency for Housing Development Projects

Position: Support

Maryland REALTORS® strongly supports HB 691 to improve the state's housing permitting process. REALTORS® see firsthand how Maryland's complex web of state and local regulations delays housing production, increases development risk, and ultimately drives up home prices for consumers.

Maryland's housing shortage is not the result of a lack of demand or interest in building. It is the product of a multilayered permitting system in which housing development projects must navigate numerous approvals across multiple executive branch agencies—often sequentially, inconsistently, and without clear timelines. Even well-planned projects that comply with local zoning and environmental standards can face years of uncertainty waiting for state permits related to housing construction or supporting infrastructure. Every delay adds carrying costs, financing risk, and uncertainty that is ultimately priced into the final home.

HB 691 takes a practical, balanced approach to this problem. By requiring state agencies responsible for permits related to housing construction to adopt streamlined permitting procedures, the bill promotes efficiency without weakening standards. Allowing for the concurrent filing and adjudication of permits, where feasible, and establishing predictable sequencing where it is not, gives developers clarity and reduces unnecessary delays. Just as important, the bill's emphasis on expedited review pathways and clear escalation processes introduces accountability and transparency into a system that is currently opaque and unpredictable.

HB 691 does not eliminate oversight or environmental protection. Instead, it creates a predictable framework that reduces risk, lowers costs, and helps deliver the housing Maryland families need. Streamlining state permitting is a critical step toward improving housing affordability and supply. For these reasons, Maryland REALTORS® respectfully urge a favorable report.

**For more information contact
lisa.may@mdrealtor.org or christa.mcgee@mdrealtor.org**