

# HOUSE BILL 241

C9

(PRE-FILED)

4lr4523  
CF SB 308

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By: **Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee (By Request –  
Departmental – Housing and Community Development)**

Requested: September 18, 2023

Introduced and read first time: January 10, 2024

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Housing and Community Development – Just Community Designation**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing the Governor, on the recommendation of the Secretary of  
4 Housing and Community Development, to designate certain areas as Just  
5 Communities based on certain criteria; providing for the prioritization of State  
6 funding for Just Communities; and generally relating to Just Communities.

7 BY adding to

8 Article – Housing and Community Development

9 Section 6–1201 through 6–1203 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 12. Just  
10 Community Designation”

11 Annotated Code of Maryland

12 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

13 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
14 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

15 **Article – Housing and Community Development**

16 **SUBTITLE 12. JUST COMMUNITY DESIGNATION.**

17 **6–1201.**

18 (A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
19 INDICATED.

20 (B) “JUST COMMUNITY” MEANS THE PART OF A PRIORITY FUNDING AREA  
21 THAT, AS DETERMINED BY THE GOVERNOR, SATISFIES THE REQUIREMENTS OF §

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **6-1203 OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

2 (C) "PRIORITY FUNDING AREA" MEANS AN AREA DESIGNATED AS A  
3 PRIORITY FUNDING AREA UNDER § 5-7B-02 OF THE STATE FINANCE AND  
4 PROCUREMENT ARTICLE.

5 **6-1202.**

6 (A) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS THAT THE STATE MUST HAVE JUST  
7 COMMUNITIES IN ORDER TO:

8 (1) AFFIRMATIVELY ADVANCE EQUITY, CIVIL RIGHTS, RACIAL  
9 JUSTICE, AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN THE STATE;

10 (2) CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF  
11 COMMUNITIES THAT HAVE BEEN HISTORICALLY UNDERSERVED, WITH ANTICIPATED  
12 BENEFITS FOR THE ENTIRE STATE; AND

13 (3) RIGHT THE WRONGS OF THE PAST, WHEN THE STATE  
14 SYSTEMATICALLY EXCLUDED CERTAIN GROUPS FROM EQUAL PARTICIPATION IN  
15 THE BENEFITS OF PUBLIC RESOURCES.

16 (B) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT THE JUST  
17 COMMUNITY DESIGNATION BE USED TO PRIORITIZE STATE FUNDING TO INCREASE  
18 RACIAL, ECONOMIC, AND HEALTH EQUITY IN THE STATE.

19 **6-1203.**

20 (A) THE GOVERNOR, ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE SECRETARY, MAY  
21 DESIGNATE AN AREA AS A JUST COMMUNITY IF THE SECRETARY DEMONSTRATES  
22 THAT:

23 (1) PAST AND CURRENT TRENDS IN HOMEOWNERSHIP, PROPERTY  
24 VALUES, COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL VACANCY, AND BUSINESS OR HOUSING  
25 INVESTMENT SHOW A NEED FOR REINVESTMENT IN THE AREA; AND

26 (2) THE AREA HAS BEEN NEGATIVELY IMPACTED BY A HISTORY OF:

27 (I) FORMS OF LEGAL RACIAL SEGREGATION INCLUDING  
28 REDLINING, EXCLUSIONARY ZONING, OR RACIALLY RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS;

29 (II) THE DEMOLITION OF RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS  
30 THROUGH THE USE OF EMINENT DOMAIN OR STATE OR FEDERAL FUNDING;

1                   (III) A STATE IMPRISONMENT RATE HIGHER THAN 750 PER  
2 **100,000 PERSONS; OR**

3                   (IV) UNEQUAL EXPOSURE TO ENVIRONMENTAL AND HEALTH  
4 **HAZARDS, INCLUDING:**

- 5                   1.     **PROXIMITY TO A FEDERAL SUPERFUND SITE;**  
6                   2.     **ESTIMATED EXPOSURE TO LEAD-BASED PAINT; AND**  
7                   3.     **RATES OF ASTHMA AMONG ADULTS THAT ARE HIGHER**  
8 **THAN THE 90TH PERCENTILE FOR THE STATE.**

9            **(B) TO MAINTAIN A JUST COMMUNITY DESIGNATION, EVERY 5 YEARS THE**  
10 **SECRETARY SHALL MAKE DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROVAL BY**  
11 **THE GOVERNOR IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION.**

12           **(C) AT THE TIME JUST COMMUNITIES ARE DESIGNATED OR RENEWED, THE**  
13 **GOVERNOR SHALL IDENTIFY STATE PROGRAMS UNDER WHICH A JUST COMMUNITY**  
14 **SHALL RECEIVE PRIORITY FOR STATE FUNDING.**

15           **(D) THE PRIORITIZATION OF STATE FUNDING FOR JUST COMMUNITIES**  
16 **UNDER SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION SHALL NOT SUPERSEDE OTHER PROGRAM**  
17 **REQUIREMENTS SPECIFIED IN STATE LAW.**

18           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
19 1, 2024.