

February 24, 2020

Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair
Budget and Taxation Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 West Wing
11 Bladen St
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: SB 987 – Racing and Community Development Act of 2020

Dear Senator Guzzone:

On behalf of Park Heights Renaissance, Inc. (PHR), I submit this letter of support of SB 987 which will designate the Maryland Stadium Authority to issue up to \$375,000,000 of bonds for the redevelopment of the Laurel Park and Pimlico racing facilities. The redevelopment of the Pimlico Racecourse is a vital component to the revitalization efforts for the Park Heights community and will be a catalyst for continued investment in this community. Not only is it vital to supporting economic growth in the Park Heights community, but it is equally as important in supporting economic growth for the State of Maryland.

PHR was formed based on a recommendation in the Park Heights Master Plan, which was finalized in 2006 and revised in 2008. The Master Plan recommended the creation of a Park Heights-based community development corporation (CDC) with the capacity to:

- effectively manage the components of the Park Heights Master Plan related to housing, economic development and human services;
- to serve as a positive and effective bridge and communication link between and among community residents, elected officials, other stakeholders, investors and the City; and
- to conduct monitoring and evaluation of all implementation activities related to the Park Heights Master Plan.

In line with the mission of the organization, PHR understands the importance of the Pimlico redevelopment project, but are focused on ensuring the residents, businesses, faith based organizations, and other stakeholders of Park Heights have the opportunity to participate in the planning and redevelopment efforts that will impact their community. We have worked diligently with community partners to finalize a Community Compact that will be signed by representative community leaders and stakeholders in the Park Heights community. We are grateful to Mayor Young, the Baltimore Development Corporation, and the MD Jockey Club for their commitment to be signatories of this agreement and to understanding that the community at large must have a voice about decisions made that will impact their lives.

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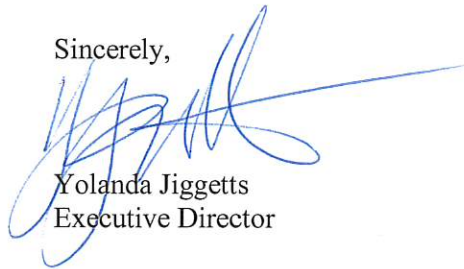
While, the community wholeheartedly supports the redevelopment of the Pimlico and maintaining the Preakness in this community, there is equal concern that the annual \$3.5m reduction in the Pimlico Local Impact Aid for the Park Heights Master Plan area may impact progress on other capital projects such construction of a community library that has long been promised to the community.

PHR commits to being a leader in driving community investment to Park Heights and is working to unite the community around a shared vision and goals. This will allow us to utilize the limited resources available most effectively and leverage opportunities to collaborate and fundraise to support continued momentum on other major development and human services priorities such as a community library.

We are pleased that this legislation also recommends funding to strengthen capacity for the organization by dedicating sufficient operating funds to support the community in these efforts. These improvements will positively change the trajectory of a community that has historically been underserved and underrepresented in major areas vital to its success.

Thank you for your commitment to empowering the community of Park Heights with this important legislation. Park Heights Renaissance, Inc. is proud to be a supporter of SB 987.

Sincerely,



Yolanda Jiggetts
Executive Director