



Montgomery County's Advocates for Better Transportation

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Letter Supporting HB 1406 – The Modest Home Choices Act of 2020

The Action Committee for Transit strongly supports HB 1406 – The Modest Home Choices Act of 2020.

The D.C. region, including Montgomery County, faces a staggering shortage of housing over the next decade, both subsidized and market-rate. The Urban Institute estimates our region needs at least 374,000 new housing units by 2030. Without intervention to address this shortage, housing costs will continue to rise, economic growth will continue to stagnate, and traffic will continue to plague our region.¹

ACT believes that we cannot adequately address transportation issues in our community without addressing housing. According to the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), more than 325,000 workers commute to jobs *each day* from communities located outside our region.² The lack of housing – particularly affordable housing – in our area drives workers and their families to leave where they work just to find housing they can afford. This situation increases everyone's commute times, undercuts Montgomery County's appeal to new businesses, negatively affects our environment, and detracts from everyone's quality of life.

The Modest Home Choices Act will allow the construction of “missing middle” housing in targeted census tracts, allowing more people to live in high-opportunity, transit-accessible areas in our communities. Specially, one of the bill's provisions allows construction of up-to triplexes in census tracts where the housing would be within one mile of an existing train station or within a quarter mile of a high-quality bus corridor. This would encourage the development of more transit-oriented development, allowing more people the opportunity to live where they work.

Everyone in our community deserves the opportunity to live where they work. They deserve the opportunity to live in areas served by transit and not forced into long commutes that strain our transportation system. Passage of HB 1406 will encourage the production of more transit-oriented housing in high-opportunity areas and improve the safety, economic opportunity, and quality of life for all Maryland residents.

¹ [Meeting the Washington Region's Future Housing Needs](#), Urban Institute, September 2019.

² [THE FUTURE OF HOUSING IN GREATER WASHINGTON: A Regional Initiative to Create Housing Opportunities, Improve Transportation, and Support Economic Growth](#), Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, 2019.