



Housing Initiative Partnership, Inc.
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Testimony SB 367
Education, Health and Environmental Committee
February 5, 2021
Position: UNFAVORABLE

Dear Chairman Pinsky & Members of the Education, Health and Environmental Committee:

Housing Initiative Partnership (HIP) is an innovative, green nonprofit housing developer and HUD-certified housing counseling agency based in Prince George's County, Maryland dedicated to revitalizing neighborhoods and removing blight. With over 30 years' experience, HIP creates housing and economic security for persons of low- and moderate-income and provides services that improve the quality of life in the communities we serve. HIP has developed over 460 affordable units of rental housing as well as over 95 single-homes sold to homebuyers earning 80% or less of AMI. HIP is a HUD-approved counseling agency providing a wide range of housing counseling services from placing homeless families in permanent housing to rental counseling to homebuyer education to foreclosure counseling to financial capability counseling.

SB 367 requires a letter of support from the legislative district in which an application is submitted for the Community Legacy Program, the Neighborhood Business Development Program, the Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative Program (BRNI), and the National Capital Economic Strategic Fund within the Department of Housing and Community Development to include a letter of support from the legislative district in which a certain project or plan is proposed; and applying the Act prospectively.

Since 2013, HIP worked with a Coalition of partners to remove application requirements that would bring approval of specific DHCD funded projects into the political process. We are deeply concerned that this bill would endanger our efforts to provide affordable housing opportunities. We believe the Department of Housing and Community Development should equitably review all applications based on DHCD's established priorities and criteria. Currently, DHCD has a notification process for the local jurisdictions for any applications submitted. We suggest that DHCD create a similar notification process for the legislative districts.

We respectfully request an UNFAVORABLE report.

Submitted by,

Maryann Dillon
Executive Director