



DRUID HEIGHTS
Community Development Corporation

Druid Heights Community Development Corporation

2140 McCulloh Street Baltimore, Maryland 21217

**Testimony SB 367 –
Education, Health and Environmental Committee
February 5, 2021
Position: UNFAVORABLE**

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

Druid Heights Community Development Corporation (DHCDC) is a community-based, 501 (c)(3) non-profit community development corporation. DHCDC is located in zip code 21217 in Baltimore City, within Census Tract 1403 a designated Urban Renewal Area. Our mission is to cause, encourage and promote community self-empowerment, through the development of economic, educational, employment, and affordable housing opportunities.

The overall goal of the organization is to eliminate blight and accelerate the revitalization of the neighborhood by preserving (where feasible) and improving existing housing and developing new affordable housing that will attract and meet the needs of low to moderate-income families. To accomplish this goal, DHCDC has implemented a number of community development initiatives that have proven to strengthen the fabric of the community. Although its core competency is housing and community redevelopment, it is also very aware of the importance of human service programs that address the needs of children and families. All programs and activities benefit low to moderate-income residents of Druid Heights and surrounding communities.

SB 367 requires an application for the Community Legacy Program, the Neighborhood Business Development Program, and the Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative Program (BRNI) 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.

For the past 40+ years, DHCDC has continued to work hard to advocate for affordable housing development projects for the community. We are deeply concerned that this bill would endanger our efforts in providing affordable housing opportunities for the greater Baltimore community. DHCDC has a deep understanding of the need for community input as our development plans continue to get support from our community residents, city officials, and state legislators.



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DHCD continues to face many challenges with funding for development projects that assist with creating affordable housing. One important factor for community development organizations is the lack of funding. With increased requirements such as a letter of support from the legislation, we feel that this will further delay our efforts in gaining adequate funding for the development projects that assist so many individuals in need of adequate housing. We appreciate the funding as with this continued funding, our organization will be able to continue to create homeownership opportunities that will assist in reducing blight, reducing crime, and help to create a healthier environment for the residents within Baltimore City.

We respectfully request an UNFAVORABLE report.

Respectfully Submitted: Ms. JohnDre Jennings, Director of Real Estate Development