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Delegate Kumar P. Barve
Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

February 19, 2021

*Testimony in support of **Bill HB1073** Housing and Community Development - Neighborhood Revitalization – ‘Passive House Pilot Program’, Sponsored by Delegate Bridges*

Dear Chairman Barve, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

I am a Registered Architect, Certified Passive House Consultant and since 2007 a full-time faculty member at Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD (MICA) at the Department of Architectural Design. I am passionate about engaging the neighborhoods of Baltimore in my teaching and practice.

In 2018 I began an initiative at MICA called the ‘Sustainable Reuse of Baltimore’s Vacant Buildings’. I invited many experts, activists, City Planners and others to speak at MICA and taught three courses with students from MICA and from Johns Hopkins University. Together we studied various design scenarios of rehabilitating vacant row-homes as Affordable Housing and studied the social and environmental impact of these energy efficient designs.

It may seem counter-intuitive that High Performance building design particularly Passive House design, is well suited for Affordable Housing. One seems to belong to the high-end market of construction while the other usually to the cheapest. But in cities like New York City, Philadelphia and Pittsburg this unlikely marriage is taking place much to the benefit of the residents’ financial and physical health and the environment.

The Passive House design methodology is all about applying science to our buildings and doing right by the residents of these projects. It offers ‘energy security’ to resident families - a chance to diminish utility bills by up to 90% in order to free up resources for their home mortgage or other essential needs. It also makes for a healthy home with a carefully balanced environment, constant filtered fresh air. The elimination of asthma triggers like mold and VOCs is particularly relevant to Baltimore City where children suffer more than two times the national rate of asthma

incidents. Passive House is also a building design method that is highly sustainable. These buildings will last much longer than normal construction and be more resilient to power outages, by taking a long time to heat up or cool down if grid power fails.

The Passive House Pilot program that Michael Rosenband, myself and others are developing aims to provide such benefits to the residents of the Greater Rosemont neighborhood but more ambitiously leverage these projects to teach young people how to build for the future, and improve their job prospects. We are partnering with the Baltimore City Public Schools and Carver Vocational Technical High School in order to teach and train youth - not only their students but soon draw upon other city youths who can benefit from our program.

The Affordable Housing we seek is permanent and to this end we have partnered with the South Baltimore Community Land Trust (CLT) that will help to steward our finished projects into the future as Affordable Housing. CLTs are shown to reduce foreclosures and evictions and provide social support to the resident families when in financial difficulty.

Last but not least as a pilot our project looks forward to future iterations of developing vacant building into energy efficient Affordable Housing. The Passive House Pilot project is a pathway for Baltimore City to Passive House designed Affordable Housing that cities in New York and Pennsylvania are enjoying and a pathway for its youth to a brighter future. Our project will have multiple positive impacts on the city's neighborhoods, residents and environment. For all these reasons we ask that you support **HB1073** sponsored by Delegate Bridges.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have. I can be reached by email at taziz@mica.edu or phone at 443.525.7375. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timmy Aziz". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Timmy Aziz R.A., CPHC

Full time Faculty, Department of Architectural Design
Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD

MBIA Testimony HB 1073.pdf

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February 23, 2021

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve
Environment & Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251,
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD, 21401

RE: House Bill 1073 (Housing and Community Development - Neighborhood Revitalization - Passive House Pilot Program).

Dear Chairman Barve:

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 100,000 employees of the building industry across the State of Maryland, supports House Bill 1073 (Housing and Community Development - Neighborhood Revitalization - Passive House Pilot Program).

This measure would establish a Passive House Pilot Program in the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) designed to provide Baltimore City high school students with career and technical educational experiences by renovating residential properties to become passive houses.

This is a creative approach to encouraging energy efficient construction, preparing high school students to enter the job market, and strengthening the workforce. This is particularly helpful for the construction and development industry, which is facing a labor shortage. Many workers left the industry during the recession and never returned. With a limited market, the cost of labor increases, which must be built into the price of the home, increasing housing costs.

Compounding this problem, many high schools have phased out shop classes, so students who are interested in pursuing construction-related vocations have very limited opportunities to learn or connect with employers in those fields. This program could help Baltimore City adapt to a changing climate while encouraging students to explore construction and development training while in school

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure a favorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: Members of the House Environment & Transportation Committee

MICA MD ETC Committee Letter 21-2-18

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Delegate Kumar P. Barve
Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Ref: HB 1073, Housing and Community Development – Neighborhood Revitalization
– Passive House Pilot Program

February 18, 2021

Dear Delegate Barve,

As president of the Maryland Institute College of Art, I am pleased to provide this letter of enthusiastic support to the “Passive House Pilot Program, aka ‘Housing as Catalyst for Social Change’ and as ‘Carver House’. The initiative would bring together the anchor institutions, MICA, Coppin State University and Carver Vocational-Technical High School, with Innovators such as The South Baltimore Community Land Trust, the Baltimore City Public Schools CTE program, Southway Builders and others in a project that will rehabilitate vacant west Baltimore row-homes into affordable, energy efficient, healthy “Passive House” homes and create learning and training opportunities for youth and students.

The pilot project is designed to fuse homeownership and “green” builder training while fighting climate change and social inequity. It fulfills the promise of regenerative enterprise by leveraging resources and partnerships to build a multi-sector ramp to self-sufficiency. Using housing as a catalyst for social change, the project will yield a model that can be replicated across the city and the nation.

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While Baltimore is a vibrant city, it is also a post-industrial city. The specific neighborhood now includes many who have quite low incomes, resulting in high rates of home and home energy insecurity. Economic dispossession leads to physical dispossession. There are blocks of abandoned houses; the people who remain often report an alienation from their neighborhoods, from the rapidly deteriorating built environment and, eventually, to the outside. During the annual “Baltimore Thinkathon,” conducted by MICA and the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance, residents who worked to keep their homes tidy reported littering outside because they did not feel the same about the streets outside of their homes. One recurring suggestion is to tear down the shells but that disrupts rows and the extended families and communities who once lived there.

The climate of Baltimore is cold in the winter and hot in the summer. Utility bills present challenges to many families. According to a [study](#), low income families in Baltimore spend an average of 18% of their income on energy—9 times the percentage of affluent families (Applied Public Policy Research Institute for Study and Evaluation). Built to the passive house international building standard, passive houses promise to save 90% of energy costs, leading to energy independence. No less importantly, the project builds a model for youth workforce development in a growing field. There is currently a need for builders skilled in sustainable building practices. As an early proposal stated, “All of these efforts in combination catalyze a thriving environment which empowers the community to steward and build upon this pilot. The ultimate goal of the Passive House pilot is to engage and empower community members to design, refit, and sustain a passive house community in Baltimore.” From the beginning, MICA’s Department of Architectural Design and Master’s degree of Social Design program have been instrumental in conceiving and building this project, demonstrating MICA’s commitment to community development.

MICA is already actively immersed in community practice. The Initiative for a Competitive Inner City profiled MICA in its study, [“The Overlooked Anchors Advancing](#)

[a New Standard of Practice for Arts and Culture Organizations to Create Equitable Opportunity in America's Cities.](#)” funded by the Kresge Foundation. MICA was the only higher education institution among the non-profit organizations profiled. The authors wrote, “We chose to profile MICA because its deep understanding of the anchor framework and its nearly two-decade long anchor engagement stood out among the arts and culture organizations we reviewed. The prominence of MICA in anchor collaboratives is also notable because arts and culture organizations, even art colleges, typically do not lead such collaborations.”

We hope to continue our community work in partnership with the State of Maryland by supporting bill HB 1073.

Sincerely,



Samuel Hoi, President,
Maryland Institute College of Art

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Passive House Pilot Program - Michael Rosenband Te

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February 18, 2021

Delegate Kumar P. Barve
Chair Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251 - House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: SB 636/HB1073

Dear Chair Barve, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

My name is Michael Rosenband and in helping to lead the Passive House Pilot Program, it is an honor to write testimony in unequivocal support for House Bill 1073.

In this pilot, we plan to transform a vacant house, located across from Carver Vocational-Technical High School, into a passive house in collaboration with community, Carver faculty and students, BCPS, MICA, Coppin State, and the South Baltimore Community Land Trust. The partnership cultivated with students and faculty from Carver is particularly important as this project will be used to develop a passive house curriculum to train a new generation of vocational graduates. This will create new career pathways that sync with the growing need for environmentally-adaptive construction, ensuring economic viability for students entering the workforce in a shifting climate.

Benefits of passive house design respond to environmental resilience through building science, and also help affordable housing challenges through reduced utility costs. The uniqueness of this project is that the passive houses would be built within the walls of existing houses; proving that marrying existing materials with cutting edge home performance engineering can provide a new future for older homes and blighted communities.

On behalf of the people involved on this journey, we thank Delegate Tony Bridges and his team for introducing this important legislation, and this committee for the opportunity to speak in support of it today.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Rosenband".

Michael Rosenband
Founder, Requity

HB1073 Passive House Pilot - AIA MD Ltr of Support

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22 February, 2021

Delegate Kumar P. Barve, Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Letter of Support for HB1073
Housing and Community Development – Neighborhood Revitalization – Passive House Pilot Program

Dear Delegate Barve:

I am writing to voice AIA Maryland's support for House Bill 1073. AIA Maryland represents nearly 2,000 architects in the state of Maryland and advocates for the profession and the quality of the built environment. We fully support sustainable strategies in building design and construction as we collectively work to lessen our impact on the environment that surrounds us. We support the intent of this bill, which would not only encourage students to gain skills and pursue careers that would further benefit the built environment, but also has the added benefit of directly impacting the community in a positive manner.

We support HB1073 and the state in implementing a pilot program to offer training for the passive house practices and commend that the results of that training will be offered as affordable housing. A program such as this would show the approachability of building and design techniques which are above and beyond the code minimum. In addition, the results of this training and improvements to a neighborhood property would lessen the financial burden on the occupant, as the utility bills would be lowered, and serve as an example for other housing construction, not just in the affordable sector. Furthermore, AIA Maryland supports the education of students and the greater public in programs that reduce our impact on the natural world.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Verbeke, AIA
President, AIA Maryland

cc: Environment and Transportation Committee:

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