



# PRESERVATION MARYLAND

March 4, 2022

RE: HB1088 African American Heritage Preservation Program – Annual Appropriations and Alterations

Chairwoman McIntosh and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Preservation Maryland and our thousands of statewide supporters, I would like to offer our support of HB1088, and our belief in the value of identifying and preserving sites, structures, and communities of historic and cultural importance to the African American experience in Maryland.

Preservation Maryland is the statewide historic preservation nonprofit, and our mission is to protect the state's unique and irreplaceable heritage while concurrently creating a more just, equitable, and sustainable. Since 1931, we have worked tirelessly to safeguard the places, stories, and communities that tell the full history of Maryland.

Preservation Maryland emphatically supports HB1088, which increases the funding of the African American Heritage Preservation (AAHP) Grant Fund from \$1M to \$5M annually. The bill also increases the maximum grant amount to \$500,000. The AAHP Grant Fund is the state's only program dedicated to the protection and enhancement of African American historical and cultural resources. This program fills a critical funding gap for at risk landmarks across the state and is an invaluable tool for equitable preservation. We know that there is great need for this grant program and increasing the funding through the passage of this legislation will go a long way to ensure that more sites that tell the history of Maryland's African Americans are preserved for future generations.

**We respectfully request a favorable report on HB1088 and thank you for your consideration.**

Sincerely,

Elly Colmers Cowan  
Director of Government Relations