



**Testimony to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
Committee**

**SB 608 – Report on the Public or Private Conversion of State Property to
Affordable Housing
Position: SUPPORT
February 8, 2022**

SB 608 would require several State agencies to work together to develop and issue a report on strategies for the development of State surplus/excess property as affordable housing. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) Maryland is the 8th most expensive state in the country for housing costs. They estimate that there is a shortage of 131,793 rental homes that are affordable and available for extremely low income renters, and that Maryland households would have to earn \$28.60 per hour to afford a two bedroom apartment at fair market rent. There continues to be a lack of affordable rental housing in Maryland for the households who need it, and part of the problem is a lack of available land to develop multifamily housing, given the financing constraints of these types of developments. Such a report could be very helpful if it identifies surplus properties that are both large enough for development and zoned - or able to be rezoned - for residential use, as well as creates a mechanism for transferring such properties to private developers for the creation of affordable housing at a nominal cost in exchange for long term affordability.

MAHC is the leading organization for the affordable rental housing industry in Maryland and represents over 185 member organizations, including nonprofit and for-profit developers, State and local housing authorities, property management companies, financial institutions, community development organizations, contractors, tax credit investors, consultants and individuals. Our members develop affordable housing properties across the state, and we encourage a favorable report on SB 608.

Respectfully submitted on February 8, 2022 by Miranda Darden-Willems, Executive Director, on behalf of the MAHC Board of Directors.

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