

19 February 2022

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

Re: Letter of Support for House Bill 1259  
Accessory Dwelling Unit Authorization and Promotion Act

Dear Chairman Barve and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

We are writing to voice AIA Maryland's support for House Bill 1259. AIA Maryland represents over 2,000 architects within the state of Maryland. We strongly advocate for affordable housing, diversity of housing options and sustainability.

The benefits offered by Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are well-documented and have been demonstrated through the successful implementation by a wide range of cities and towns and states throughout the country. ADU legislation has already been enacted by California, New Hampshire, Oregon, Minnesota, Rhode Island and Vermont. These real-life case studies, have proven ADUs successful on many levels adding to the vitality of communities where they are implemented. ADUs provide benefits for tenants, homeowners, and the community at large while requiring limited infrastructure, adding to the tax base and providing flexibility for changing lifestyles.

ADUs provide neighborhood stability. They can be used to house family and friends at risk of displacement, facilitate aging in place and quite simply provide affordable options for housing in vibrant communities. Income generated from ADUs can be used to help pay the mortgage of a homeowner and provide income to help offset rising housing costs. The extra space provided by ADUs can evolve to serve different functions over time and house adult children, aging parents, or caregivers. In an area zoned single-family then one's only choice, otherwise, is to live in a single-family home. This can be expensive and unaccommodating to a number of residents who may simply require less and desire the privacy that comes by separating dwelling units while still maintaining close proximity.

ADUs are inherently efficient and encourage modest living. They have a smaller carbon footprint than a single-family home to build and maintain. They take less energy to heat and cool due to their efficient sizes especially if they are attached to an existing dwelling, or modifying a structure that already exists on site. ADUs, as infill projects, are typically located near other resources which requires fewer car trips and less traffic. Additionally, infrastructure will already exist on ADU sites to serve the principal dwelling unlike in new suburban single-family communities where sewer, power, street, sidewalks, storm drains, etc. must be extended, sometimes for miles. Not all dwellings are created equal – if we want to build more environmentally friendly dwellings, then we need to make it possible to build and preferably incentivize doing so.

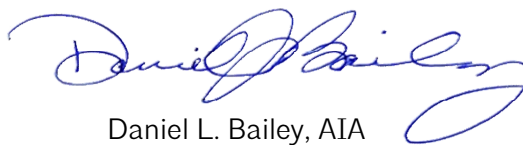
ADUs are an effective way to supplement a dire shortage in housing supply. ADUs can be built faster and less expensively than almost all other forms of housing. They are a useful tool to help alleviate our region's housing crisis without changing the neighborhood character of different areas in our state. The market rate rents will most certainly be lower than any other housing types available due to modest ADU sizes, meaning they will be the most affordable option for many. This makes certain areas of Maryland attainable to those who could not afford to live there otherwise.

We therefore respectfully ask your committee to provide HB 1259 with a favorable recommendation and allow ADUs to have a positive impact in all of Maryland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Parts', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Chris Parts, AIA  
Director, Past President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Daniel L. Bailey', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Daniel L. Bailey, AIA  
Director, Past President