



February 24, 2022

Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary  
Chair, Ways & Means Committee  
Room 131  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

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

Re: Opposition to HB 1104

Dear Committee Chairs and Members of the Committees:

The Mayor and City Council of Gaithersburg oppose House Bill 1104, Affordable Housing Land Trusts - Funding and Property Tax Exemption, and respectfully request that you grant this bill an unfavorable report.

This bill requires the Department of Housing and Community Development to reserve a certain percentage of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds awarded to the State for non-entitlement areas for award to affordable housing land trusts in the non-entitlement areas. It also establishes the intent of the General Assembly that certain entitlement areas award a certain percentage of community development block grant funds to affordable housing land trusts. As a CDBG entitlement community, the City of Gaithersburg considers this to be an unwarranted encroachment upon local government authority.

Beginning in 2003, the City of Gaithersburg has received CDBG funds directly from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The overall goals of the CDBG Program are to provide decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons. The City has always committed its annual CDBG funding to support these goals. Gaithersburg uses a significant percentage of its regular CDBG award for closing costs and down payment assistance to income-eligible first-time homebuyers, eviction prevention/housing stabilization programs, and contracts with a third-party, nonprofit provider of job training and employment counseling services.

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MAYOR  
Jud Ashman

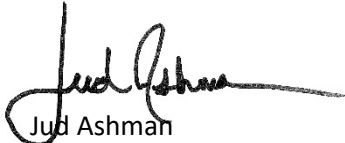
COUNCIL MEMBERS  
Neil Harris  
Lisa Henderson  
Jim McNulty  
Ryan Spiegel  
Robert T. Wu

CITY MANAGER  
Tanisha R. Briley

In addition to recommendations provided by staff, the City has designed a community-wide Citizen Participation Plan to provide for and encourage citizen participation in the CDBG program. The primary goal of this Plan is to provide all residents of the community with adequate opportunity to participate in an advisory role in the planning, implementation, and assessment of the City's CDBG program. We respectfully ask the State to allow decisions relating to the prioritization of our CDBG funding to be left to the communities and residents those funds are intended to serve.

For the reasons stated herein, we respectfully request an unfavorable vote on House Bill 1104.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jud Ashman", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Jud Ashman  
Mayor  
City of Gaithersburg