

Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Senator Guzzone:

GeN'xt Ministries, Inc. DBA GeN'xt A.C.T.S. would like to express our strong support for Senate Bill 874, which would establish Community Safety Works as an ongoing program within the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. Established as a budget initiative within the Department, Community Safety Works has already provided valuable assistance to nonprofit organizations, businesses and local governments through targeted investments in crime prevention that impact community safety.

GeN'xt! Ministries, Inc., is a grassroots organization that has been involved in a beautification project in the Eastern District of Baltimore City, specifically at the 2314 E Lafayette and N.Montford Corner. The project was introduced by the former Commander of the Eastern District, Major Lansey, to reinforce community policing, develop trust and increase engagement between community members and the police department. The beautification of this corner will also help to deter crime and bring a sense of pride to the individuals living in that underserved area. The Eastern District saw 45 homicides in 2020 and 47 in 2021. The non-fatal shootings were 115 in 2020 and 117 in 2021. While the robberies, burglaries and assaults are trending down significantly, the goal is to do what we can to ensure that all the numbers trend down in all the areas of crime. We want to do our part to assist the police in their efforts to keep the communities safe. The beautification project plan is create a city commemorative garden with both hardscape, including littler letters, and native plant life. We will also engage a local artist to paint a mural on the 2314 E. Lafayette property. In 2022 GeN'xt applied was awarded funding for this project through the Community Health and Safety Works Grant Program which is airmarked for this project. It's the only funding that has been received for this project to date.

Again, this is to request a favorable report on SB874 to continue this valuable program. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chelrisa Swanston

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President & CEO, GeN'xt Ministries, Inc.



GeN'xt

The Next Generation Ministry