

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

Subject: Support Letter for SB-0874

Mr. Chair and Memembers of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Bon Secours Community Works (BSCW), a place-based non-profit organization serving West Baltimore, to pledge our support for SB-0874 which seeks to establish the Community Health and Safety Works Grant Program in the Department of Housing and Community Development.

Bon Secours Community Works (BSCW) works to enrich West Baltimore communities with programs, services, and affordable housing that contribute to the long-term economic and social viability of neighborhoods. The establishment of the Community Health and Safety Works Grant Program as a special non-lapsing fund would help fund on an ongoing basis important community services and physical improvements that would benefit the residents of West Baltimore. A non-lapsing fund would support physical improvements to the underinvested areas of West Baltimore, helping to attract local business, improve resident safety, increase homeownership, and generally drive the revitalization of underserved communities. A fund would also support open space development, like park spaces, that provide respite, easy access to nature, and a lower temperature during the hot summer months. Lastly, the establishment of the Community Health and Safety Works Grant Program would help service providers engage directly with residents in need of services that would reduce violence, crime, and recidivism.

BSCW would be a willing and eager partner interested in implementing services and physical improvements to the benefit of residents of West Baltimore. As an organization that has worked alongside and on behalf of the community for three decades, the priorities of the Community Health and Safety Works Grant Program are directly aligned with the priorities that residents of West Baltimore express day in and day out. We need to establish ongoing, consistent funding sources, to see the change that our community members wish and deserve.

Thank you for sponsoring this important bill and I am pleased to offer this letter of support. If you have any questions, I can be reached by e-mail at George_kleb@bshsi.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "George Kleb", written in a cursive style.

George Kleb
Executive Director

Bon Secours Community Works
George_kleb@bshsi.org