



March 6, 2023

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

Dear Senator Guzzone:

The Baltimore Urban Leadership Foundation aka The Door 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.

The Baltimore Urban Leadership Foundation aka The Door is located in East Baltimore and have served the Oldtown/Middle East, Madison/East End, and Patterson Park North & East neighborhoods with community-based programming for over 35 years. The Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance data shows that the rate of challenging circumstances in our surrounding community is much higher than for Baltimore City overall. One of the neighborhoods that we service has the 3rd highest unemployment rate of the 57 neighborhoods tracked in Baltimore. The rate of children living below the poverty line in 3 of the neighborhoods that make up our demographics is a jarring 55%, 56% and 40%, respectively, compared to 32% for Baltimore City as a whole. Within our neighborhoods, the violent crime rate per 1000 residents is 37.3% and the Part 1 crime rate (this includes assault, burglary, rape, homicide, larceny, and auto theft) is 113.7% according to statistics gathered.

As a recipient of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development grant in the past, The Door has been able to upgrade its security system and install interior and exterior camera to make our facilities safer and monitor the activities of our community residents while they are on our premises. These upgrades are very instrumental to the success of our programming as we expand our outreach to more youth, families, senior citizens and other non-profit organizations in our community.

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

Sincerely,

Tehma H. Smith Wilson, CEO