



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB643**  
**Housing – Community Development Fund Program – Funding**

March 6, 2023

Senator Guy Guzzone  
Miller Senate Office Building  
3 West  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Testimony of Marian House in Support of SB643**

**Dear Senator Guy Guzzone and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,**

Marian House is a holistic, healing community for women and their children who are in need of housing and support services. Marian House provides comprehensive support services to assist women with experiences of trauma, including poverty, substance abuse, and chronic mental health issues. **I write to urge you to support Senate Bill 643, Housing – Community Development Fund Program – Funding.**

SB643 creates a permanent funding source for the Community Development Fund which was created in 2018. The funding is critical operating dollars for community-based organizations to use for affordable housing, neighborhood and commercial revitalization, housing and financial counseling, small business development, community services, and more.

We are seeking \$5 million from the Unclaimed Property Fund after usual disbursements have been made.

Over forty years ago, Marian House was opened to provide reentry supports for women leaving incarceration as Sisters and laywomen recognized that lack of support contributed to recidivism rates. Today, we have also expanded to serve women with histories of trauma including homelessness, incarceration, neglect, substance abuse and mental health needs. Since our opening, we have assisted women in reinventing and rebuilding themselves through services such as: counseling, substance abuse treatment, job training and providing both long and short-term housing. All the women we have served have overcome obstacles on their journeys to become contributing members of society in the Baltimore area. General operating support is the working capital nonprofits need to sustain their day-to-day operations. A lack of working capital can prevent organizations from meeting basic operational needs, like payroll and rent. In the last three years, we have lost staff and struggled to keep up with inflation. This bill would help ensure that we are able to sufficiently fund necessary affordable housing for some of Maryland's most vulnerable citizens.

**It is for these reasons and more that we request your FAVORABLE SUPPORT of SB 643.**

Thank you for your support,

Katie Allston, LCSW-C  
President and C.E.O.



# MARIAN HOUSE

Women Moving from Dependence to Independence