



MARIAN HOUSE

Women Moving from Dependence to Independence

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB3

9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding

January 17, 2023

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

Testimony of Marian House in Support of SB3

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 3 – 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding.**

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.

In FY22 Marian House served sixty-six women in our transitional housing program. Of those sixty-six, 86% had a chronic mental illness and 83% had a substance abuse disorder. The 9-8-8 initiative for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline is crucial to supporting Marylanders like our clients who are in need of mental health support services. By allotting \$12 million to the 9-8-8 Trust Fund, the services that are run under the initiative will be able function to their greatest ability and provide exceptional service to vulnerable populations in their time of need.

By supporting SB 3, Maryland's most vulnerable populations will have greater access to these support services that have the funding they need to function. On behalf of the women we serve at Marian House, I respectfully urge you to take the call to action in **SUPPORT of SB3.**

Thank you for your support,

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