



Neighborhood Housing Services of Baltimore, Inc.

January 20, 2023

Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair
Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building Room 131
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 83

Honorable Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Committee:

I am the Executive Director of Neighborhood Housing Services of Baltimore (NHS), and a resident of Baltimore City. Our organization believes that economic and social justice are a right for all people and communities. We promote this belief by removing barriers of access to homeownership, helping resident access resources to maintain their homes, and supporting communities historically impacted by systemic disinvestment. I have worked on tax sale reform supporting residents and communities for more than 10 years and currently serve as co-chair of Mayor Scott's Tax Sale Work Group identifying ways to reform and improve the tax sale system.

In our experience with tax sale one of the challenges encountered is being able to get clarity on how much is owed to redeem a property. It is sometimes difficult to get in contact with tax sale purchasers and there are significant points in the tax sale process when significant fees can be added to the cost to redeem. Requiring a response from tax sale purchasers within 5 days will ensure access to information for residents looking to retain their home.

We ask that the Committee issue a *favorable* report on HB 1196 as we continue to work on ways to reform the tax sale system as a whole,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. T. Ellis".

Daniel T. Ellis
Executive Director



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