



# PRESERVATION MARYLAND

January 31, 2024

Hon. Brian J. Feldman  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building, 11 Bladen St.  
Annapolis, Maryland

**RE: SB356 FAVORABLE**

**Chairperson Feldman,**

On behalf of the staff and Board of Directors of Preservation Maryland and our thousands of statewide supporters, I thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in **SUPPORT of SB356**— a piece of legislation which will require local governments to develop a streamlined development review processes for nonprofit organizations pursuing the development of affordable housing on property (often parking lots, etc.) under their ownership.

Preservation Maryland is the nonprofit, statewide voice for historic preservation that harnesses the power of historic places by revitalizing and reinvesting in communities, advocating, and building the historic trades workforce for the benefit of all Marylanders. (Learn more at: [presmd.org](http://presmd.org))

*Why We Support This:* Moving the process forward to develop more affordable housing, especially in existing communities, where infill should be developed is a priority for Preservation Maryland and its statewide program Smart Growth Maryland. From churches to museums, many non-profit organizations own vacant and underutilized property which could be transformed into productive use as affordable housing. Expediting that process is critical to keep costs down and produce more units of affordable housing. Additionally, the legislation does *not* exempt projects from existing review – but instead requires *expedition* and provides that jurisdictions may request a waiver from developing an expedited process if they have a legitimate impediment preventing them from establishing a process.

**Favorable**

Sincerely,

Nicholas A. Redding, President & CEO