



Wes Moore | Governor

Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor

Carmel Roques | Secretary

Date: February 16, 2024

Bill Number: HB538

Bill Title: Land Use - Affordable Housing - Zoning Density and Permitting - Housing Expansion and Affordability Act

Committee: House Environment and Transportation

MDOA Position: FAVORABLE

The Department of Aging (MDOA) thanks the Chair and Committee members for the opportunity to submit this letter of support on House Bill 538 - Affordable Housing - Zoning Density and Permitting - Housing Expansion and Affordability Act.

The Maryland Department of Aging (MDOA) serves as Maryland's State Unit of Aging, administering federal funding for core programs, overseeing the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) network at the local level that provides services, and planning for Maryland's older adult population. A lack of affordable housing options for older adults is one of the biggest and consistent challenges we hear about from our AAA network, state and community partners, and older adults themselves.

Pursuant to a recent Executive Order, in January 2024, MDOA launched the Longevity-Ready Maryland Initiative,¹ which will build upon existing efforts across state agencies, private and philanthropic sectors and other stakeholders to tackle real-life challenges throughout the lifespan, taking a whole-of-life and whole-of-government approach. Key goals of Longevity-Ready Maryland are for all Marylanders to lead lives that are healthy, financially secure, socially connected, purposeful - with increased access to affordable housing. The Housing Expansion and Affordability Act will absolutely do this, serving as a critical step forward for older Marylanders.

¹ See Maryland Department of Aging: Longevity-Ready Maryland Initiative *available at*: <https://aging.maryland.gov/Pages/LRM.aspx>



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For these reasons, the Department of Aging respectfully urges a favorable report for HB 538. If you have any questions, please contact Andrea Nunez, Legislative Director, at andrea.nunez@maryland.gov or (443) 414-8183.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carmel Roques". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Carmel Roques
Secretary
Maryland Department of Aging