

HB 538 Housing Expansion and Affordability Act

My name is Ray Nosbaum. I live at 1503 Sanford Road, which is in District 18. I am active with CHEER in the Long Branch community and am a member of St Camillus, which is a member of Action in Montgomery. CHEER in Long Branch collaborates with AIM. Long Branch and St Camillus are in District 20

I work with the Long Branch Stakeholders Housing Action Team convened by CHEER on addressing affordable housing issues especially since there will be 3 Purple Line stations in Long Branch

The Housing Expansion and Affordability Act needs amending for it to impact Long Branch positively

HB 538 and SB 484 Housing Expansion and Affordability Act of 2024 threatens already existing affordable housing in some locations around transit where there is already older, established housing that is market affordable

This bill would encourage housing to be built within 1 mile of train stations by allowing more density and quicker review processes. This Bill **needs** provisions for protecting **existing** affordable housing near transit with NO NET LOSS protection of the number of existing affordable housing units near a transit station. The Bill granting 30% bonus density near rail without NO NET LOSS protection would create incentives to demolish buildings with current market affordable units in Long Branch near new transit stations and only require new developments to include 25% affordable units. This would result in a loss of affordable units

The Bill needs to include clear, mandatory one-for-one replacement of existing affordable units with new affordable units or No Net Loss

Let me give a specific example of why this is important:

The Montgomery County 2013 Long Branch Sector Plan supports development at the intersection of University Boulevard and Piney Branch because one of the 3 Purple Line stations in Long Branch will be at that intersection

The Long Branch Sector Plan identified apartment complexes likely to be redeveloped because of the Purple Line, with 288 affordable units in 2013. This is all of the units in those apartment complexes. With redevelopment for higher density allowed by zoning there might be a maximum of 686 new units. Current language of the proposed Bills in the Assembly allowing for 25% affordable housing in higher density around transit stations would keep 170 of the current 288 affordable units. The neighborhood could lose almost 120 of the current 288 apartments that are affordable to current residents. This is why the proposed Bills need NO NET LOSS protection

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Thank you for reading my concern and I hope the Housing Expansion and Affordability Act of 2024 is amended to include language for No NET LOSS of affordable homes near transit stations. Please reply to these comments