



**TESTIMONY FOR HB0003**  
**Land Use**  
**Expedited Development Review Processes for Affordable Housing**

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Stewart

**Committee:** Environment and Transportation

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Aileen Alex, co-chair

**Position:** **FAVORABLE**

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0003 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

MLC believes housing is a basic human right. However, Maryland is facing a significant affordable housing crisis which necessitates expedited reviews of proposed affordable housing projects. HB0003 offers counties flexibility in accomplishing expedited reviews by reducing the application paperwork or streamlining the review process, for example. Counties can even obtain a waiver if necessary. The target beneficiaries are households with an income less than or equal to 80% of the area median income.

Affordable housing not only helps meet a basic human need but has other positive impacts. These benefits include fewer unhoused, fewer evictions, reduced poverty levels, and improved education of the children living in these developments. Mark Rank, a Professor of Social Welfare at Washington University, "It is estimated that for every dollar spent on reducing childhood poverty, the country would save at least \$7 with respect to the economic costs of poverty."

Counties also benefit from more money spent locally, more job creation, and an increased tax base. According to a study from the National Association of Home Builders, "Building 100 affordable rental homes generates \$11.7 million in local income, \$2.2 million in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and 161 local jobs in the first year alone." Affordable housing projects can also help local governments achieve transportation and climate policy objectives.

MLC believes expedited reviews of affordable housing projects are urgently needed to address Maryland's housing crisis.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.