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Testimony on House Bill 7
Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2024
House Environment and Transportation Committee

Position: Favorable

Maryland Nonprofits is a statewide association of more than 1500 nonprofit organizations and institutions. We are again asking you to establish the **Housing Innovation Pilot Program**, this year proposed by House Bill 7.

Resolving most of social and economic inequities that burden the lives of too many Marylanders, particularly families and communities of color, requires that we address multiple challenges that they face on a daily basis. Factors such as lack of available transportation, food insecurity, affordable childcare, and access to adequate health care and services, all impact the health and education of children, and opportunity for access to jobs and stable employment.

Safe and stable housing is critical for all of us, but for many today is simply unaffordable.

House Bill 7 would establish the Housing Innovation Pilot Program in the Department of Housing and Community Development to provide funds for certain mixed-income, cross-subsidized housing and to create opportunities to increase the volume of housing production; establishing the Housing Innovation Fund as a special, non-lapsing fund to be used only to provide low- or no-interest loans to local housing authorities; etc.

Housing affordability – or ‘unaffordability’ – has become a serious crisis in our state. According to the Maryland Housing Needs Assessment that was completed in 2021 by the National Center for Smart Growth and Enterprise Community Partners, Maryland will have to make a significant investment in housing over the next 10 years in order to keep up with economic and demographic shifts in the state. The analysis showed that the state is short 85,000 rental units for low-income households. With Maryland expected to add an estimated 97,166 low-income households by 2030, the shortage will worsen unless the state creates and preserves many more affordable homes.

Along with other initiatives being proposed this year, we urge you to give House Bill 7 a **favorable report**.



Maryland Nonprofits' mission is to strengthen organizations and networks for greater quality of life and equity.