

HB0538_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
2/20/2022

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703-7134

TESTIMONY ON HB#0538 - POSITION: FAVORABLE

Land Use – Affordable Housing – Zoning Density and Permitting (Housing Expansion and Affordability Act of 2024)

TO: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#0538, Land Use – Affordable Housing – Zoning Density and Permitting (Housing Expansion and Affordability Act of 2024) ¹

The lack of affordable housing in Maryland is creating a crisis. As reported by Maryland Matters:

A report commissioned by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development last year found that Maryland lacks about 85,000 rental units for people earning 30% of the area median income or below. That report also found that Maryland is expected to add an estimated 97,200 low-income households between 2020 and 2030.

Even realtors have acknowledged the problem and think we must work together on solutions. This bill is a statement by Maryland that local jurisdictions must not use their housing codes when those codes conflict with the ability to place needed housing within a community. It encourages local jurisdictions to provide housing justice and equity towards a certain type of housing stock that contributes to solving a lack of affordable housing.

When state funding for housing occurs, the state must work in partnership with the local jurisdiction on making that housing become available. This bill attempts to outline and mandate that a locality does not create barriers to expansion of housing within their community. This will not be permitted to them through enforcement mechanisms they have established that prevent or retard having that housing occur. My Jewish faith tells me, in Proverbs 24:3 “A house is built with wisdom, and it is established with understanding...” Support for the stranger, the poor, the widow and the orphan are a commandment repeated throughout the Torah. This bill supports that righteous objective with a just treatment of those members of our society most in need of that blessing from institutions and persons capable of delivering those results. **I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB0538.**

¹¹ <https://www.marylandmatters.org/2022/03/13/as-new-survey-shows-rising-concern-about-housing-affordability-realtors-join-call-for-accessory-dwelling-units/#:~:text=A%20report%20commissioned%20by%20the%20Maryland%20Department%20of,estimated%2097%2C200%20low-income%20households%20between%202020%20and%202030.>