



TESTIMONY FOR HB0538

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

Bill Sponsor: Speaker

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0538 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.

Maryland is facing an affordable housing crisis. The amount of new housing has outstripped demand and prices have increased dramatically. Young people can no longer afford to buy a house. This bill, if enacted, is designed to incentivize new affordable housing development and would permit properties to be developed quickly and with higher density as long as the developers provide a certain percentage of affordable housing. This is accomplished by offering 'density bonuses', which would allow more units to be built in the area than typically allowed.

Density bonuses apply to properties that would be developed close to a transportation hub or housing built by a non-profit organization that would contain at least 50% affordable units.

The bill would also permit new manufactured homes in single-family residential zones.

Our members understand that we need to change the way that we permit housing in order to encourage the growth that we need. Additionally, we need to encourage high-density, affordable housing near transportation hubs. We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.