



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive

JENNIFER AIOSA
Director of Government Affairs

AMANDA KONTZ CARR
Legislative Officer

WILLIAM J. THORNE
Legislative Associate

BILL NO.: **HB 538**

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

SPONSOR: Speaker Jones (By Administration Request)

COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation

POSITION: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

DATE: February 20, 2024

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 538 – Land Use – Affordable Housing – Zoning Density and Permitting (Housing Expansion and Affordability Act of 2024). This legislation seeks to establish regulatory incentives to development to address the housing supply and affordability crisis. The legislation contains three main components:

- HB 538 allows for certain properties to be developed with higher density if they include a certain percentage of affordable units (defined in this context as units preserved at 60% AMI).
- The legislation limits the ability of local jurisdictions to deny permits or unreasonably restrict projects funded by low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC) or other affordable housing financing programs managed by State DHCD on the basis of local adequate public facilities ordinances (APFOs). Baltimore County concurs with the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) that this exemption should sunset after a period of 15 years.
- The legislation permits new manufactured/modular homes in areas zoned for single-family residential uses, overriding any local laws or ordinances that would prevent their placement.

HB 538 is a comprehensive approach at tackling the housing crisis head on. As a whole, the bill is a positive step that has the potential to benefit local housing production on sites where that development is appropriate. Consistent with our partners at MACo, we believe that changes are still needed to ensure that housing production does not preempt local land use authority or impact critical community infrastructure.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on HB 538 from the House Environment and Transportation committee. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov.