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February 22, 2024

RE: Support for House Bill 1035

Mr. Chairman, Madam Vice Chair and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

Glen Neighborhood Improvement Association fully supports HB1035, which would establish an Insufficient Condominium Reserve Account Grant Fund. This fund will be critical to helping low-income seniors pay special assessments for condo building repairs that could otherwise force them into debt or out of their homes entirely.

Many condominium buildings in the Park Heights Avenue corridor were built in the 1960's and 70's. Many buildings have deferred maintenance which needs to be addressed and insufficient funds in their reserve accounts to get the work done. These repairs are necessary – for building safety, to protect homeowner value, and to preserve the neighborhood around them.

Without sufficient funds in reserve, many buildings will be faced with the need to levy special assessments on each owner to pay for repairs. Many of the residents are lower-income older adults who simply cannot afford to pay these special assessments. If residents are unable to pay, the condo building can put a lien on their unit, which could result in their losing their home.

Even if the building does not take this action, other scenarios include increasing the assessment on the remaining owners to cover those who do not pay, or delaying repairs while waiting for payment, further decreasing the safety and value of the building.

This fund would help low-income condo owners to meet their assessments, ensuring their buildings will be able to grow their reserves to the necessary level, leading to safe, stable places to live and secure investments for the homeowners.

Sincerely,

Betty Cherniak

Betty Cherniak

GNIA President