



**HB0538 – Land Use – Affordable Housing – Zoning Density and Permitting (Housing Expansion and Affordability Act of 2024)
Hearing before the Environment & Transportation Committee
February 20, 2024**

Position: SUPPORT (FAV)

SUPPORT: Arundel Community Development Services, Inc., (“ACDS”) urges this Committee to issue a Favorable report on HB0583, the Housing Expansion and Affordability Act of 2024.

ACDS serves as Anne Arundel County’s nonprofit housing and community development agency, helping Anne Arundel County residents and communities thrive through the provision of safe and affordable housing opportunities, programs to prevent and end homelessness, and community development initiatives. As part of this role, ACDS advises the County on issues related to affordable housing, develops housing and community development strategies for Anne Arundel County, and works with the County to support the development of safe, affordable housing for all County residents.

Like the rest of the State, Anne Arundel County is facing a housing crisis. With 45 percent of all renters being cost burdened and the median home sales price at \$470,000 for 2023, we have a severe shortage of both rental and homeownership opportunities in the County, especially for low- and moderate-income residents. To address these challenges and ensure that Anne Arundel County is “the Best Place for All” the County is tackling its housing crisis with a multi-faceted approach, having enacted policies to incentivize the development of affordable housing through land use and minimize barriers to development, establishing a Housing Trust Fund to financially support affordable housing development, and administering robust and effective eviction and homelessness prevention programs. Recently enacted policies include establishing and enhancing our own “Workforce Housing” density incentive provision and exempting LIHTC developments from school APF requirements. While there is still much work to do, collectively, these efforts have helped generate a pipeline that will preserve or create over 1,550 units in the next couple of years.

The Housing Expansion and Affordability Act of 2024 includes and expands upon provisions, such as eliminating APF requirements as a barrier to the development of LIHTC developments, that we have found to be helpful in generating new housing development opportunities here in Anne Arundel County. Creating increased density allowances in areas where it makes sense – close to transit and redevelopment areas- increases the financial viability of development and the requirement to include affordable units ensures that our workforce will not be left behind, while ensuring sustainable and smart development. Furthermore, increasing density allowances for nonprofit developers helps build the development capacity of smaller, locally rooted developers, like ACDS and partners like The Arc of the Chesapeake and Habitat of the Chesapeake, who are uniquely invested in and committed to our communities.

We look forward to the many benefits the implementation of the Housing Expansion and Affordability Act of 2024 will bring for our community.

For the reasons noted above, ACDS urges the Committee to issue a FAVORABLE report on HB0583.