



TOWN OF NORTH EAST

February 14, 2024

The Honorable Chairman Marc Korman
The Maryland House of Delegates
Environmental and Transportation Committee
6 Bladen Street Annapolis MD 21401

Subject: Town of North East 21901 Written Testimony on HB538 - Unfavorable

Chairman Korman and Members of the Environmental and Transportation Committee,

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to submit testimony today. The Town of North East opposes HB538 and respectfully urges an unfavorable report out of committee.

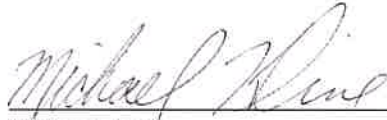
If passed, Senate Bill 484 and House Bill 538, according to Maryland's Department of Legislative Services, would prohibit a local legislative body from restricting the placement of certain manufactured homes in specific residential zoning districts under particular circumstances. Additionally, it would prevent a local jurisdiction from utilizing elements of an adequate public facilities law to deny permits for certain State-funded affordable housing projects or other qualified projects, or to restrict or limit their development in a particular manner.

The Town maintains that if SB 484 and House Bill 538 are enacted as introduced, they would adversely affect the general welfare of the Town of North East. This is because the legislation would strip local elected officials and zoning and land use bodies of their authority to manage the maximum density of residential areas. Such management involves considerations such as local zoning laws, historic preservation, environmental impacts, and the potential strain on public facilities. All of these factors must be carefully balanced to ensure the creation of a healthy, thriving community for its citizens.

Local government serves as the primary connector between citizens and public services. HB538 seeks to upend that connection by completely ignoring local zoning authority. North East has strived to be a community with well thought out plans and solutions, as evidenced in the Town's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. Our Maryland Municipalities are governed by our Comprehensive Plans and local zoning authority, enabling each municipality to be unique. While HB538 is well-intentioned, this one size fits all approach will harm small communities such as ours.

We respectfully request an unfavorable report.

**Mayor and Commissioners
of the Town of North East**



Michael Kline, Mayor



Kelly A. Benson, Commissioner



Catherine Bernard-Dutton, Commissioner



Hilary A. Crothers-Moore, Commissioner



Raymond Mitchell, Commissioner