



HB3 - Expedited Development Review Processes for Affordable Housing - Requirements

Testimony to the House Environment & Transportation Committee
Position: Favorable

submitted via electronic transmission
January 26, 2024

To Chair Korman and all Members of the Committee:

I am writing today on behalf of Enterprise Community Partners (Enterprise) **to urge support for HB3** to enable more time-sensitive review of affordable housing development proposals in local jurisdictions across Maryland.

As a leading national and state provider of faith-based development expertise, training and technical assistance, development partnerships, financing, and peer-learning programs, Enterprise is also uniquely positioned to provide suggestions that may enhance the bill's tenets further, as outlined below for your consideration.

About Enterprise:

Founded 40 years ago here in Maryland, Enterprise is committed to make home and community places of pride, power and belonging, and platforms for resilience and upward mobility for all.

Our impact and investment in Maryland housing and affordability is one measure of our commitment to the state and its residents. Enterprise's affordable housing production, preservation, and rehabilitation efforts total more than \$1 billion in total portfolio value, including 76 apartment communities and more than 7,500 homes in Maryland. Our work is centered on holistic resident services and environmentally sustainable design, construction and operations.

In addition, we provide millions of dollars each year in loan financing, equity investments and grants to nonprofit and mission-minded community organizations, as well as technical assistance, partnerships, and a variety of federal, state, and local policy analysis.

Since 2006, our [Faith-Based Development Initiative](#) (FBDI) has leveraged \$2.2 million in grants, and \$154 million in total capital for faith-based development in and near Maryland. Participants in the initiative have created or preserved 1,500 homes.

Enterprise brings substantial first-hand experience with the vital role Maryland's houses of worship can continue to play in helping to achieve state and local goals for meeting housing affordability and other community needs. We support legislation like HB3 works to provide equitable treatment for charitable organization and other governmental entity proposals to be considered in local review processes, and to benefit as other projects would in cases where expedited review is possible. We

applaud Delegate Stewart, Senator Muse, and other supporters of this legislation, and express appreciation for all housing affordability champions on the committee.

Benefits of HB3:

As submitted, the bill would ensure that any affordable housing project with a charitable organization, including but not limited to a house of worship, as a partner would be eligible for expedited process consideration. We understand that a local jurisdiction may request a waiver from this process in certain circumstances; overall it is very helpful when processes can perform due diligence while also recognizing the genuine value of reducing timelines and associated costs for important, community-serving affordable housing projects.

In an era when Maryland communities need quality, affordable housing at historic levels, more charitable organizations like religious institutions with land holdings are considering leveraging their properties as a way to help meet their mission and support community members in this way. Having access to any process and due diligence considerations at the local jurisdiction level, such as an expedited review process, affords more resources that can be invested back into the project itself, and supports bringing needed affordable housing homes to a community as quickly as possible.

Our team would be happy to answer any questions you may have about our work in Maryland, and we appreciate your consideration of these views. On behalf of Enterprise Community Partners, we urge you to support HB3 as discussed herein.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Cc: Rev. David Bowers, Vice President and Mid-Atlantic Market Leader
Rev. Joseph K Williams, Senior Program Director