

Testimony in Support of HB0607

Christian Jackson

Owner, Jackson Appraisal Group

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Good afternoon, Chair and members of the committee.

My name is Christian Jackson, and I am a Certified Residential Appraiser, real estate professional, and the owner of Jackson Appraisal Group here in Maryland. Over my 18-year career, I have appraised thousands of homes, trained appraisers, and witnessed firsthand the barriers that make entering this field extremely difficult—especially for those without existing industry connections.

I stand before you in strong support of House Bill 607 because, in reality, breaking into the appraisal industry is not just difficult—it's nearly impossible if you don't already know someone in the profession. And in minority communities, appraisers are few and far between.

The traditional apprenticeship model has long been a roadblock, often unintentionally excluding those without personal connections to established appraisers. PAREA removes that barrier by providing an alternative path—one based on merit, education, and commitment rather than who you know. HB 607 would provide financial support to those pursuing this alternative route, creating a broader, more accessible entry point into the profession.

As a Black appraiser, one of the most common reactions I see in minority communities is relief when I arrive at the door. Many homeowners tell me outright that they are glad to see someone who looks like them. Does this mean my valuation will differ significantly from another appraiser's? Not necessarily. But it does bring a level of trust to the process—something that is severely lacking in today's appraisal environment amid the many allegations of appraisal bias.


Beyond concerns about bias—conscious or unconscious—there's also the issue of geographic competency. Because minority appraisers are so rare, homes in these communities are often appraised by professionals from outside the area, who may not fully understand the nuances of that particular local market. Increasing the number of appraisers who live in and represent these communities will restore trust in the profession and ensure more accurate, informed valuations.

We cannot address trust issues in appraisals—or even appraisal bias—without fixing the pipeline of who enters this profession in the first place. HB 607 is a practical, necessary step toward that goal. By funding access to PAREA, Maryland can help develop a new generation of well-trained, diverse appraisers who better reflect the communities they serve.

I urge you to pass HB 607 and position Maryland as a leader in expanding access to the real estate appraisal profession to any and all who aspire to pursue this unique career path.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Christian Jackson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Christian Jackson', written over a horizontal line.

Owner, Jackson Appraisal Group

Certified Residential Appraiser