

February 20, 2025

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman  
Chairman, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: SB 890 Housing and Community Development – Division of Just Communities – Establishment**

Dear Chairman Feldman:

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 100,000 employees statewide, appreciates the opportunity to participate in the discussion surrounding **SB 890 Housing and Community Development – Division of Just Communities – Establishment**

This bill establishes the Division of Just Communities in the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and transfers the authority to designate an area as a Just Community from the Governor to DHCD. MBIA does not support this measure.

The establishment of the new division proposed in the bill will force DHCD to have to increase their budget to account for the hiring of additional staff and setting up the proposed programs. The State of Maryland is operating at a near \$3 billion budget deficit, making this an inopportune time to add additional costs associated with hiring new staff and increasing responsibilities for the Department.

Developers and property owners that are in Just Communities will now face increased scrutiny from the newly-created division. This could lead to higher compliance costs and make new projects in those areas more difficult to complete. The communities covered under SB 890 need more available housing options, and the bill could bring unintended consequences that lead to making housing options less available for low-income residents.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure an unfavorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or [lgraf@marylandbuilders.org](mailto:lgraf@marylandbuilders.org).

cc: Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee