



21 February 2025

The Honorable Senator Brian Feldman
Chair of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Letter of Support for Senate Bill 891
Accessory Dwelling Units

Dear Chair Feldman and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

On behalf of AIA Maryland, representing over 2,000 architects across the state, I am writing to express our strong support for Senate Bill 891, which advances the development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as a critical component of Maryland's sustainable housing future. As architects committed to responsible community planning and environmental stewardship, we recognize that ADUs present a unique opportunity to address housing affordability, reduce urban sprawl, and create resilient, energy-efficient communities.

SB 891 supports the integration of ADUs into existing single-family residential areas in a way that prioritizes thoughtful, sustainable growth. By allowing homeowners to add secondary dwelling units within their properties, this legislation fosters gentle density that aligns with smart growth principles—maximizing land use without the need for extensive new infrastructure. ADUs can provide affordable housing solutions for families, aging populations, and individuals seeking more flexible living arrangements, all while utilizing existing utilities and public services more efficiently. This approach minimizes environmental impact while strengthening neighborhood character and economic viability.

ADUs encourage smaller, more energy-efficient living spaces that require fewer resources to build, heat, and cool compared to traditional housing. They support walkable communities by increasing housing options near existing jobs, schools, and transit, reducing reliance on automobiles and lowering carbon emissions. Moreover, well-designed ADUs can incorporate passive design strategies, high-performance building materials, and renewable energy technologies, further advancing Maryland's climate resilience and energy efficiency goals.

The bill's provisions to limit excessive impact fees, ease restrictive zoning laws, and promote equitable access to ADU construction are important to making these units a viable and scalable housing solution. Additionally, clear guidelines on setbacks, utility connections, and parking requirements will ensure ADUs are seamlessly integrated into existing communities while maintaining neighborhood aesthetics and functionality.

AIA Maryland supports the passage of SB 891 as a vital step toward a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient built environment. We urge the committee to advance this important legislation and look forward to collaborating on policies that align with Maryland's housing and climate goals. in our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Parts", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Chris Parts, AIA
Director, Past President, AIA Maryland