



House Bill 503

Position: Favorable

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Date: March 4, 2025

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic health and growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

House Bill 503 (HB 503) addresses Maryland's housing shortage by requiring state agencies to identify regional housing infrastructure gaps and apportion them to local jurisdictions based on job concentration. Jurisdictions with housing deficits must take proactive steps to approve housing development projects unless there are clear, justified reasons for denial. The bill also incentivizes the construction of affordable housing by allowing these projects to count more significantly toward closing local housing gaps. Additionally, it establishes a legal framework to challenge improper denials, ensuring that housing supply keeps pace with economic growth and workforce needs.

Maryland's housing shortage presents a significant barrier to economic growth, workforce attraction, and business expansion. With only 33 available workers for every 100 job openings¹, businesses across the state are struggling to fill positions. HB 503 provides a strategic framework to close these gaps by encouraging local jurisdictions to prioritize housing development in areas of greatest need while maintaining reasonable safeguards for community and infrastructure considerations.

By streamlining approvals for workforce housing, incentivizing development near transit hubs, and ensuring that housing policies support economic mobility, this legislation will strengthen Maryland's business climate and improve quality of life for our residents. Employers across the state recognize that housing accessibility is directly linked to talent retention and economic competitiveness.

For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests a **favorable report on HB 503**.