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## Land Use - Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act) Position: Favorable March 4, 2025

Mr. Chair, Madam Vice Chair and Members of the House Environment & Transportation Committee:

I write today to urge a **favorable** report on HB503, the Housing for Jobs Act, on behalf of CHAI and LeadingAge Maryland. CHAI is a community-based nonprofit agency located in northwest Baltimore City and County. Over four decades of service, we have developed over 1,700 units of affordable housing primarily serving adults 62+. We also provide community-based housing services and programs that promote social connection and engagement among our older neighbors. CHAI is an active member of LeadingAge Maryland, which unites nonprofit providers of aging services, including affordable housing communities and providers of housing with services.

CHAI's dual mission of strengthening both communities themselves and the neighbors who live there leads us to focus on lifting up both people and place. The Housing for Jobs Act of 2025 likewise will serve to strengthen both Maryland neighborhoods and the Marylanders who live in them. Housing provides the platform for people to pursue their life goals – whether to find jobs, improve their health, make community connections and so on – success in the pursuit of these goals depends on having a stable place to live. When there is insufficient attainable housing, people have two choices – they remain with uncertainty, compromising their other personal goals, or they move elsewhere to find a home that works for them to build their lives. If we want to retain and grow our population and support Marylanders in achieving quality of life, we must ensure an adequate supply of housing. Further, truly strong communities must offer various types of housing that meet the needs of diverse community members at every age and stage, each income level, and all circumstances they find themselves in. No one type – rental, homeownership, condo, townhouse or single-family home – is the answer. We must offer choice. And to do so, we must enact policy that promotes housing production.

As an affordable housing developer, it is clear to CHAI that the Housing for Jobs Act will improve upon current processes and facilitate the building of more homes. The industry has become increasingly complex, with many layers of funding, multiple partners, and significant regulatory requirements. Navigating this complexity to achieve affordable housing production is challenging, and legislation that simplifies the process is most welcome.



We believe the Housing for Jobs Act will do just that. It will establish objective standards for approval of new projects, which will reduce uncertainty and offer clarity for developers on whether a proposed project will comply. Upon review of open and transparent qualifications, developers will know whether their project can be approved *before* they spend time and in CHAI's case, precious nonprofit resources, on the project. This will reduce waste of time and money in an already complex field and allow all interested parties to be on the same page about development in their neighborhoods.

We urge your support on HB503, the Housing for Jobs Act.

Respectfully submitted:

Lisa K. Budlow  
Chief Executive Officer

