



## Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

House Environment and Transportation Committee

HB 1239: Fair Housing and Housing Discrimination - Regulations, Intent, and Discriminatory  
Effect

February 28, 2025

Letter of Information

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) is an independent, public policy organization that creates change to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities to live the lives they want with the support they need. From this perspective, the Council advocates for policies and programs that make Maryland a place where everyone is able to live where they want.

Maryland is in a housing crisis that affects all communities, but disproportionately amplified for people with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities are more likely to be extremely low-income renters and to experience higher rates of discrimination in housing.<sup>1</sup> Data from the Social Security Administration shows that the 4.1 million people with disabilities ages 18 to 64 who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) cannot afford an apartment in *any housing market in the United States*, which puts them at a disadvantage when encountering housing discrimination. Still, data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development show 45% of all housing complaints report to HUD were disability-based.

We understand the intention of this bill is to allow the Department of Housing and Community Development (the Department) to adopt regulations that advance fair housing protections. This has the potential to benefit people with disabilities, among many other communities. As this work moves forward, it will require thoughtful consideration about the implementation. The best way to do this is by the Department continuing to work with disability advocates in the community.

*While investments in housing equity are without question needed, including for people with disabilities, the Council believes that the amount, purpose, and timing of such efforts must take into consideration the needs of all Marylanders with disabilities. Funding for this bill should not be offset by limiting essential funding for other critical needs, most immediately the Developmental Disabilities Administration community services that thousands of Marylanders depend upon.*

Contact: Dr. Stephanie Dolamore, Deputy Director, [sdolamore@md-council.org](mailto:sdolamore@md-council.org)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/recognizing-addressing-housing-insecurity-disabled-renters/>