



**House Bill 503 Land Use – Regional Housing Infrastructure Gap (Housing for Jobs Act)**

House Environment and Transportation Committee

March 4, 2025

**Position: SUPPORT**

Bridges to Housing Stability is a nonprofit organization serving individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Howard County, MD. We appreciate this opportunity to present testimony in support of House Bill 503.

HB503 would reduce Maryland’s housing shortage by setting goals for new housing production. This bill would require the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and Department of Planning to determine regional housing infrastructure gaps and provide clear standards under which local jurisdictions can deny new housing.

Maryland’s significant housing shortage is driving housing costs higher and making Maryland unaffordable for current and prospective residents. At present, the Washington, DC Region has a shortage of nearly 60,000 homes and the Baltimore Region has a shortage of nearly 90,000 homes, totaling a shortage of nearly 150,000 of homes in just 8 counties and Baltimore City to maintain an average of 1.5 jobs per available housing unit.<sup>1</sup>

Over the past 10 years, median rents have increased 36% and median home prices have increased nearly 48%, resulting in Maryland ranking 43<sup>rd</sup> in housing affordability and 9<sup>th</sup> in total cost of living. With these increases, 1 in 3 families in Maryland have become cost-burdened by housing and 53% of renters are paying over 30% of their income on rent. As a result, outmigration is being led by young Marylanders, with nearly 40,000 leaving the state in 2022 alone and 44% of younger renters considering leaving Maryland due to housing costs.<sup>1</sup>

When homelessness rises, the economy suffers. Maryland’s economy has been stagnant since 2017, with only 1.6% GDP total growth compared to the national 13.9%. Employment growth has only increased 1% (US Average: 7.4%), and personal income per capita has only grown by 1.2% (US Average: 9.5%). On average, only 33 workers are available for every 100 jobs. As a result, many businesses are unable to grow or even operate at full capacity.<sup>1</sup>

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While HB503 will require the creation of new housing in jurisdictions with a housing infrastructure gap, it also seeks to mitigate concerns that new growth will negatively impact public facilities – a concern shared by many Howard County residents. New housing projects are still able to be denied if the development would have an adverse impact on the health and safety of its residents, would overcrowd schools, overwork water and sewer facilities, and a variety of other compliance concerns.<sup>1</sup>

HB503 will drive economic growth while promoting housing production in regions that have suffered. By establishing a process to measure housing gaps based on a ratio of jobs to housing units and increase housing production where needed, Maryland can improve its economic competitiveness and create new revenue opportunities to drive growth.

For these reasons, Bridges to Housing Stability supports HB503 and urges a favorable report.

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<sup>1</sup>Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, [Governor Moore's Housing for Jobs Act of 2025](#)

*For more information, please contact Emily Brandon at (410) 312-5760 ext. 106*