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March 4, 2025

Environment and Transportation Committee  
Maryland House of Delegates  
250 House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership Support for HB 503 – Housing for Jobs Act**

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Honorable Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee:

On behalf of the Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership (BRHP), thank you for the opportunity to provide support for HB 503, the Housing for Jobs Act.

BRHP is a non-profit organization that expands housing choices for low-income families who have historically been excluded from housing in well-resourced neighborhoods by helping them access and transition successfully to safe, healthy, and economically vibrant communities. As the Regional Administrator for the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program, BRHP currently provides over 4,300 low-income families rental assistance in the form of Housing Choice Vouchers coupled with counseling support for families as they move from areas of concentrated poverty to areas of opportunity in Baltimore City and the five surrounding counties.

**The Housing for Jobs Act Will Drive Housing Production and Economic Growth**

Maryland's economy is being constrained by a critical lack of affordable housing. The Housing for Jobs Act will help address this crisis by streamlining housing development processes, increasing transparency, and making it easier to build affordable homes where they are needed most.

This legislation will boost critically needed affordable housing development by shifting development processes from discretionary to objective, reducing

unnecessary delays and costs and making housing projects—especially affordable and nonprofit-led projects—more feasible. By eliminating opaque and unpredictable review processes, state and local funding can stretch further, ensuring more affordable units are built per dollar spent.

This development is essential for Maryland families and for the Maryland economy. Maryland is one of the most expensive states in the country for housing, with the [National Low Income Housing Coalition's Out of Reach](#) report finding Marylanders have the 9<sup>th</sup> highest per hour state housing wage, or the wage needed to afford a 2-bedroom apartment at the average Fair Market Rent in the state. For many low-income families, rising rents create insurmountable barriers to housing stability. For our program participants who have often waited years to receive assistance, this can result in a struggle to find an available unit within the timeline allotted by the voucher and extended time couch surfing and other destabilizing experiences, such as school attendance challenges for children. Expanding the overall housing supply will increase rental options for these low-income families.

Limiting residential development hurts the entire state by limiting economic growth, displacing workers, depressing the future workforce, and deterring businesses from expanding in Maryland. As the Maryland Comptroller's most recent [State of the Economy Report](#) highlights, a robust affordable housing inventory is pivotal for Maryland's economic prosperity. The report notes, "More affordable housing inventory can boost Maryland's economy by lowering cost of living, thereby attracting and retaining talent." The state should be making all efforts to increase the stock of affordable housing to bolster our stagnant economy and welcome businesses to the state.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on HB 503. Thank you for your time and commitment to strengthening Maryland's housing and economic future.

Sincerely,

Adria Crutchfield  
Executive Director