



Support the Housing for Jobs Act (HB0503)

Dear Members of the House Environment & Transportation Committee,

We are the [Maryland Just Power Alliance](#), a coalition of 3 non-partisan community power organizations: [Anne Arundel Connecting Together](#) (ACT), [Action in Montgomery](#) (AIM), and [People Acting Together in Howard](#) (PATH), representing tens of thousands of Maryland residents. We organize with people in congregations, schools, and neighborhoods to build power for policies that make our communities more fair and livable for everyone. We are asking you to support the Governor's Housing for Jobs Act (HB0503) when it is considered by the Environment & Transportation Committee.

Maryland has a shortage of 150,000 homes, which is driving up the cost of housing and creating a housing cost burden for a high percentage of our communities. Many young adults, seniors, essential workers, people of color, and people with disabilities lack affordable, quality housing options because of a lack of supply. We are committed to addressing the housing crisis through supply and other strategies, so that everyone can have a safe, healthy home they can afford.

In his book, [The Affordable City](#), urban planner and policy expert Shane Phillips states that the foundation of affordable communities is a healthy balance of supply, subsidy, and stability. Subsidy for affordable housing and stability for renters are more commonly understood as tactics for affordability. Yet, without enough housing supply we don't have enough homes for everyone and this means:

"Rents and home prices rise as a result of scarcity, the cost of construction balloons as land and labor grow more expensive, landlords gain leverage over renters (and sellers over buyers), and poorer tenants are replaced by higher-income households, with the less fortunate pushed to areas with fewer amenities and limited access to jobs, education, and community."

Lack of supply is not only a problem for the efficiency of our housing market and for economic development, but more crucially it creates the conditions for vulnerable renters and homebuyers to be discriminated against or overcharged by substandard housing options.

The values from our many faith traditions compel us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. We must ensure that there are enough homes in all our communities for our neighbors to call home. We are counting on you to pass a strong version of this bill out of your committee.

Thank you for your consideration.